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# The Guardian

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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

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## Sport 98

The Open: Tiger regains his title  
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Decca Aitkenhead

## Ecstasy is finished

Comment, page 12



President Mandela with supermodel Naomi Campbell, left, and his daughter Zinzi at the Kruger National Park yesterday. PHOTOGRAPH: ADL BRADLOW

## The world's most popular man reaches 80 and ponders buying a wife in exchange for 60 cows



Grace Machel, living with Mandela for the past year

David Beresford  
in Johannesburg

THE world's feminists had better brace themselves: the world's most popular man is rumoured to be on the verge of marriage — and he has allegedly bought his wife-to-be for 60 particularly fine cows.

South Africans were waiting anxiously last night to see whether Nelson Mandela will tie the knot for the third time on his 80th birthday on Saturday, as reported by the Johannesburg Star.

The report said he would marry the woman he has been living with for the past year, Grace Machel, the widow of the former Mozambique president Samora Machel.

The paper said yesterday that "Jobola" (tribal bride price) had already been delivered to Mrs Machel's family in Maputo after being selected on President Mandela's behalf by the South African Cattle Breeders' Association.

Rumours of the pending marriage have been around for some time. A spokeswoman for the president said last week she had no knowledge of such plans. But the Star said yesterday the wedding would take place at President Mandela's private home in Johannesburg, with the city's chief magistrate presiding.

The South African president, who divorced his second wife, Winnie, in 1996, announced his love for Mrs Machel last year. He has since taken her on foreign trips, insisting she

be treated as South Africa's first lady.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu has humorously chided him in public for setting a bad example to the nation's youth by failing to formalise the relationship. But the president has protested he is too old for another marriage. There is reported to be some hostility in Mozambique to the idea of the widow of a national hero re-marrying.

Late last year Mrs Machel declared, in a Mozambique radio interview: "I will never marry again."

Mandela's first marriage, to Evelyn in 1944, ended in divorce in 1957. He married Winnie a year later and remained passionately in love with her during his 27-year imprisonment. But the relationship collapsed after his release when he was

confronted with evidence of her infidelity. During his divorce action, which Winnie contested, he confessed he had been "the loneliest man" following his release.

Whether the wedding will go ahead on Saturday is still open to doubt, however. The chief magistrate of Johannesburg, Charlton Bashe, denied having been approached to officiate. And the president's office yesterday maintained its denial of any knowledge of the event.

President Mandela's birthday celebrations got under way in a South African game reserve, the Kruger National Park, yesterday when he hosted a party for more than 1,000 orphans. He danced on stage as he was serenaded by young girls singing "You're so special".

## Police patrols to go private

Alan Travis  
Home Affairs Editor

PRIVATE security guards patrolling Britain's streets will soon be a common sight, under plans being drawn up by chief constables.

The prospect that the public's traditional demand for more bobbies on the beat will more likely be met by a Rentokil guard than a uniformed constable was raised yesterday by Ian Blair, Chief Constable of Surrey. He told the Association of Chief Police Officers in Birmingham that it should drop its opposition to private security companies patrolling public places and instead get involved in licensing and organising the growing army of "parapolice" which operates in shopping centres and private estates.

Last night the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, said the plans were "a real possibility" as private security companies were already providing town centre guards, park patrols and nightclub bouncers on a wide scale. The current unregulated situation was not satisfactory and the public would recognise the need for private patrols.

"If you talk to the public they understand that you cannot have a police officer walking up and down their street all day and every day. You never had that. That was a myth about what happened in some golden age."

He said the plan was for the police to discuss, and not something for government prescription. But even if police numbers were doubled they alone could never satisfy the demand for visible street patrols. Private security guards would not replace existing police patrols but would provide additional reassurance for the public.

Mr Blair's idea won support from several chief constables, but some senior officers expressed concerns that the scheme could lead to the demise of the police on the beat and leave patrols available only in areas that could afford them.

The proposals are to be for-



'The public understand that you cannot have a police officer walking up and down your street all day. That was a myth about some golden age'

Jack Straw

ally discussed by chief police officers this autumn.

Backing the idea would involve a sharp U-turn for Acpo, which three years ago became so concerned about the criminal backgrounds of private security operators that it pressed the Conservative government for state regulation. Legislation is expected soon.

In his speech Mr Blair told delegates there were already 50,000 private security guards in Britain, and private guards or local authority patrols operated in more than half the force areas in England and Wales.

He said the police faced the risk of becoming merely an emergency response and law enforcement service. The last 50 years had seen them steadily lose "market share", whether it was guarding cash in transit, stewarding football matches or escorting prisoners. It was time for the police to abandon their 100-year-old monopoly on patrolling and

accept that few officers actually went out on the beat.

He urged them instead to get involved in training and licensing private security, local authority and voluntary patrols. While the big four security companies — Securicor, Chubb, Rentokil and Group 4 — were not interested in patrolling small estates they would, however, be very interested in patrolling whole communities.

Licensed guards would wear "police compliant" badges as a guarantee of their standard and recruits could be drawn from the unemployed through the welfare to work programme. They would not have police powers but would carry radios to keep in touch with the area police officer.

Mr Blair said these private patrols could do far more than just patrol the streets. He cited the Newport Rangers turn to page 3, column 7

Ian Blair, page 12

## Change or close, Eyre tells Royal Opera House

New board demonstrates 'little public evidence of improvement'

Dan Gheister  
Arts Correspondent

SIR Richard Eyre yesterday called for the Royal Opera House to be closed and a new organisation built from scratch should it fail to implement the changes demanded in his report.

Giving evidence to a cross-party committee of MPs Sir Richard, whose report was published at the end of last month, said: "It's too early to make a judgement on the conduct of the new board except that we have little public evidence of improvement — and we have some signs of business as usual."

"The option which I don't explore [in my report] because it seems a penal payment is to close the organisation and build it from scratch. There is no justification for them to continue to receive public support," Sir Richard told the Culture Select Committee yesterday.

Conservative committee member Michael Fabricant said: "You've been withering in your criticism. Should the current board resign too?"

Sir Richard said: "It becomes a problem of how long you allow them to experiment."

Committee chairman Gerald Kaufman asked: "Can you say exactly what this board has done since December or its reconstitution to correct the situation?"

a Lottery grant of £78.5 million towards the £213 million redevelopment of its Covent Garden home.

"Unless the ROH regards itself as an organisation that exists for the public good and if they won't change, there is no justification for them to continue to receive public support," Sir Richard told the Culture Select Committee yesterday.

In his report Sir Richard calls for an overhaul of the management structures at the ROH, and for the organisation to recognise that it has a responsibility to open itself to public accountability.

The ROH receives £14 million of public subsidy a year for its resident companies, the Royal Ballet and the Royal Opera. It also received

"I can't give any substantive answer to that," said Sir Richard. "I have no idea. As I understand it there is a stand-off where the board is saying they can't implement my recommendations until they have a guarantee of further funding, and they're being told they can't have further funding until they produce a detailed [business] plan."

In the absence of anything being offered when Sir Richard compiled his report, he said it could be taken that there was not a properly costed business plan. Just a few days before the report was published, a letter from ROH chairman Sir Colin Southgate to the Culture Secretary, Chris Smith, was leaked to the press in which Sir Colin said the ROH could not survive after its reopening without a doubling of its subsidy.

Citing the lack of financial controls and the recent dismissal of the Royal Opera's head of education as evidence that nothing had changed, Sir Richard said: "There are serious, endemic problems in the management, but it is not beyond the capacity of man to sort it out. Unless they are prepared to put education at the heart of their act and allocate a ring-fenced budget... then they deserve not only to be indicted but to have their grant withheld."

Mr Kaufman said he had been told by a senior member of the ROH management that its deficit had continued to rise, despite assurances that it had been brought under control. The deficit at the end of the 1996/97 financial year was £1.5 million. By the end of March 1998 it had risen to £2 million.

The ROH in Covent Garden closed last July for redevelopment and is due to open in the autumn of 1999. Since the award of the £78.5 million Lottery grant, the biggest to an arts organisation, the ROH has been under fire for elitism and maladministration.

Following the publication of the select committee report into the ROH last December, a new board and chairman were appointed. Sir Richard's review was commissioned by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport to investigate the possibility of merging the ROH with the English National Opera. His terms of reference were later broadened to include an examination of the state of lyric theatre in London. The ROH and the ENO have until the end of this month to respond to the report.

## Inside

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Chronic fatigue syndrome — ME — is real, distressing and debilitating, Sir Kenneth Calman, the Chief Medical Officer, said.

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## Sketch

## Cook gets back in the saddle



Simon Hoggart

ROBIN COOK, the Foreign Secretary, was giving evidence to the Commons committee on foreign affairs when it suddenly went into closed session. Outside in the corridor he chatted about his hobby, riding, and how you're surrounded by bossy teenage girls who know more about horses than you do. A while before the election, he had been thrown. As the principal spokesman on foreign affairs for Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition lay on the ground, feeling humiliated, a 16-year-old girl marched up and said: "Come along now, be a brave soldier, get back in the saddle!"

It's been a bad year, but Mr Cook has been talked back on to the horse.

Not that yesterday's spavined nag offered much of a challenge. We're often told that in these days of a huge Labour majority the real scrutiny is being carried out by select committees.

However, being scrutinised by this lot is like being examined by a team including Mr Magoo, Captain Mainwaring, Colonel Blimp, Inspector Clouseau, plus Dave Dee, Dozy, Beaky, Mick and Titch. (Except the Liberals' David Heath, and Ted Rowlands, who used to be a foreign minister, and knows a thing or two.)

We began with a trot round the new public spending review. Mr Cook told the committee that we could at last spend some money in the Caspian Basin, where we have only 11 diplomats compared with the Germans' 89. "This will produce 10 per cent of the world's oil in a decade."

A little worm of anxiety started squiggling in his stomach. There are so many parts of the world to be troubled about: the Middle East, Rwanda-Burundi, Russia. Now we have to lie awake wor-

rying about the Caspian Basin - wherever that turns out to be.

Mr Cook explained too that he wanted more ethnic minorities and more women in the FO. Fewer than 10 ambassadors and high commissioners are female, but that is going to change. Quite right too. "Manisha Patel of the FO" has an excellent ring.

Norman Godman, a Scots Labour MP, bridled. Was it true that our new embassy in Moscow would cost more than the Scottish Assembly building? Mr Cook did not reply, but I hope it does. Russia is, I fear, even more important than Scotland.

Finally they got onto the topic of Sierra Leone, which is all they wanted to talk about in the first place. This proved rather difficult. Ernie Ross, another Labour Scot, had clearly been told by the whips to filibuster in order to protect the Foreign Secretary.

He rambled on about the World Service. He rambled on about the British Council. He rambled on about a speech by Julian Lewis on Wednesday. The right to roam does have its limits, as the Orangemen found at the Garvaghy Road. Sadly there were no stun grenades to throw at him.

Mr Cook told us how often he had attended on the committee. "Hear, hear!" said Mr Ross, with more loyalty than anyone needs.

Peter Emery asked if the committee could see the various minutes and notes about the coup in Sierra Leone.

Mr Ross was enraged, as if someone had put alkaline batteries up his backside. "I object to this line of questioning!" he shouted. "I object to this line of questioning! Because it is wrong!"

Sir John Stanley asked a similar question. "I officially object to this line of questioning," said Mr Ross, forcing the chairman, under the pressure of order, to clear the committee.

"Perhaps the Foreign Secretary doesn't need this protection," said Diane Abbott, and Mr Cook looked like someone who has been enjoying a relaxing swim, and then finds himself bundled to shore by burly bodyguards.

The Legg report is due soon, and I suspect Mr Cook has little to worry about. He can soon center away into the sunset.



Anthony Ratcliffe and his wife, Jean. The former deputy headteacher said he felt vindicated by the settlement

PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER

'I felt I could not cope any longer after two years of bullying'

Former teacher Anthony Ratcliffe

## Anger at payout to teacher

### £100,000 settles bullying case

Vivek Chaudhary  
Education Correspondent

PARENTS of pupils at a south Wales primary school reacted angrily yesterday to the payment of £100,000 damages to a teacher who claimed he was constantly bullied and suffered two nervous breakdowns.

Anthony Ratcliffe, aged 49, former deputy headteacher at

Sageston County Primary in Carew, near Pembroke, was awarded the money in an out-of-court settlement against Dyfed County Council, which is believed to be one of the first bullying claims settled in a teacher's favour.

The council denied the allegations and the settlement was made by insurers of the former council, which is now known as Pembrokeshire County Council.

One of the incidents Mr

Ratcliffe claims contributed towards a breakdown took place in December 1991 when, he claims, he was asked to present a wrapped Christmas gift to a former teacher. It turned out to be a chocolate penis, which he was asked to hand over with the words: "I hope you enjoy a nibble this Christmas."

A bottle of wine brought to the party by Mr Ratcliffe was said to have been re-labelled "Randy Brandy" after the presentation.

Mr Ratcliffe said yesterday: "It was a totally inappropriate joke. I was very embarrassed and unhappy after the incident and it reflected the way I was being treated."

There were dozens of incidents and I felt that I couldn't cope any longer. The two years of bullying had a devastating impact on my family but now I feel that I have been vindicated."

Mr Ratcliffe, who now works as a self-employed kitchen fitter, had a minor breakdown in October 1992.

He asked to be moved to another school but was told by the local education authority that he would have to return to Sageston, where, he claimed, the bullying became worse.

He suffered a complete nervous breakdown in January 1994 and his health became so poor that he retired from teaching in April 1995.

Parents of pupils at the village school criticised the settlement.

Janice Scourfield, aged 53, said: "I totally support the

school. We just can't believe that what went on could have been any more than light-hearted banter ... The amount of compensation is just disgraceful - just think how many schoolbooks or computers could have been bought with £100,000."

Sheila Gregory, aged 44, who has two children at the school, said: "It is a marvellous school ... the staff are very involved with the children and I can't believe they could bully another member of staff."

Mr Ratcliffe was backed by his union, the Association of Teachers and Lecturers. A spokesman said: "The bullying was a series of incidents which appears innocuous but eventually led to Mr Ratcliffe's breakdown."

"Bullying is endemic in teaching and we need proper procedures to deal with it. Local education authorities have to start tackling it," he added.

Ms Morris, who is still the headteacher at Sageston Primary, yesterday refused to comment.

A spokesman for Pembrokeshire County Council, which now runs the school, said: "Throughout, the council has not accepted the allegations made by Mr Ratcliffe and the proceedings have been strenuously resisted. The insurers and Mr Ratcliffe have, however, agreed to settle the case ... Such an agreement does not alter the position and the council continues to reject the allegations."

## Review

## Why is this hokum at the National?

Michael Billington

Oklahoma!  
Olivier Theatre

CERTAINLY, it is well done. But the question remains whether it is worth doing. With half the West End theatres occupied by musicals, the National Theatre should have higher priorities than a 13-week straight run of a Rodgers and Hammerstein golden oldie.

What, you may ask, about *Cats* and *Dolls*? Few objections were raised there. But, initially, that played in rep. And, while Loesser's musical has the integrity of a genuine work of art, *Oklahoma!* is a different case. Rodgers and Hammerstein certainly broke with Broadway convention by taking a rural theme and striving for organic growth. But the paradox of the show is that it reaches out for reality and then falls back into quaint folkiness.

The proof lies in the treatment of Jud Fry, the solitary hired hand who vies for the affections of the dithering Laurey with the cussed cowman Curly. Jud, much the most compelling character in the piece and here excellently played by Shuler Hensley, is a darkly obsessive figure whose love for Laurey is genuine.

But, having involved you in Jud's fate, Hammerstein's book perfunctorily kills him off and arbitrarily absolves Curly of the crime. The story stubs its toe against authentic tragedy and then whisks you back to the wholesome world of musical comedy.

In fact, it's a much more old-fashioned show than its admirers claim. Exactly as in the days of operetta, the main story is mirrored by a comic

sub-plot in which the amorous Ado Annie is torn between the affections of a Persian peddler, Ali Hakim, and a local lover. The situation is finally resolved in a front-cloth scene, involving the Persian's passionate farewell to Annie, that is clearly there to mark time while the stage is set for the final number. Ali Hakim is a symbol of *Oklahoma!*'s underlying hokum.

I would not deny that Trevor Nunn stages it very well. He and designer Anthony Ward present us with the clean image of a curved russet landscape that conveys the territory's aching emptiness. Nunn also captures the sense of a potentially divided community coming together nowhere better than in the Chekhovian moment when the whole cast freezes for a wedding photograph.

Susan Stroman's choreography is also wittily inventive. In the first-act dream sequence she shows Laurey fantasising about marriage to the masturbatory Jud, who at one point succumbs to frilly-corded chorines clutching Bob Fosse-style chairs. The second-act opener, *The Farmer and the Cowman*, is vigorously staged as a boedown on the verge of mayhem.

Among the cast, Hugh Jackman is a virile and mischievous Curly and Maureen Lipman a sprightly Aunt Eller, even if Josefine Gabrielle cannot quite disguise Laurey's tireless indecisiveness. But at the end of the day one is left with a plethora of familiar Rodgers tunes tethered to a Hammerstein story that touches on tragedy and then shies away from it. In the commercial theatre, this revival would be welcome: whether it warrants the National's resources is open to question.

## US allows thalidomide for leprosy sufferers

Martin Kettle  
in Washington

THE United States yesterday became one of the first countries to license thalidomide - 35 years after it banned the controversial drug - when government health officials authorised it for sale.

But the decision by the federal Food and Drug Administration was hedged with unprecedented restrictions aimed at ensuring that there can be no repeat of the thousands of birth defects which turned thalidomide into one of the most notorious drugs of all time, and triggered a legendary 1960s British lawsuit between the victims and Dischillers, the UK parent company of the firm marketing the drug.

After months of speculation, the FDA said yesterday that thalidomide was an effective treatment for a small number of leprosy patients who suffer from a serious inflammation called erythema nodosum leprosum. However, in authorising the use for this small group - there are said to be around 50 cases in the US each year - the FDA imposed a raft of tight restrictions.

Every patient who uses the drug will be required to enrol in a government monitoring programme. The makers of thalidomide, the New Jersey-based firm Celgene, will be allowed to supply the drug only to authorised chemists and dispensers. Women patients will be required to undergo pregnancy tests, and all patients for whom thalidomide is prescribed will be told to use contraception at all times.

However, the FDA said it could not require doctors not to prescribe thalidomide for other appropriate conditions, and it is known that the drug is being tested for possible use in treating AIDS-related ulcers and wasting. Thalidomide is quite widely available illegally in the US as an AIDS-

related treatment, and the FDA acknowledged that it may in due course be prescribed more widely in these and other cases.

Thalidomide was banned worldwide 35 years ago after it was blamed for birth defects in more than 12,000 babies, many of whom were born without arms or legs, and with defective organs.

The drug had been prescribed widely during the 1950s and 1960s as a sedative and treatment for morning sickness for pregnant women in 48 countries, including Britain.

Ironically, the FDA won widespread praise at the time because of its work in preventing the drug from going on sale in the US. A few Americans nevertheless took thalidomide in clinical trials or had it prescribed in other countries.

A number of other countries, including Brazil and Mexico, have recently authorised the limited availability of thalidomide.

## Alert over suspended breast cancer surgeon

Nick Hopkins

HUNDREDS of women diagnosed with breast cancer were being urged to call a helpline last night after an investigation into the surgeon who operated on them.

Douglas Irving, 51, was suspended by Angus NHS Trust in Brechin after his patients' records were reviewed following complaints from colleagues about his methods.

Mr Irving, a consultant at Stracathro Hospital, also stood down as medical director in Angus.

The trust said yesterday Mr Irving had breached guidelines but refused to elaborate.

However, it is understood his patients were not given either of the tried and trusted methods for diagnosing breast cancer - a biopsy or fine needle aspiration.

Although no patient had complained, the trust fears women may have had mastectomies when they did not have cancer, or may not have received proper treatment.

"He seemed to be using gut feeling for some of these operations," said a source at the hospital.

A spokesman said a helpline had been established for 150 former patients treated since 1993. They will be offered a clinical review by a breast specialist as soon as possible, if they wish.

The trust spokesman said: "A preliminary audit of Mr Irving's breast surgery caseload over the last five years has found that guidelines have not been consistently observed. The audit has established that the failure to follow surgical guidelines may have compromised the treatment and outcomes of a number of present and former patients."

## education

Every Tuesday in the

*The Guardian* INTERNATIONAL

مكتبة الامير







Tribunal told of 'veiled threat' and broken promise to secretary who returned from two years' paid maternity leave

# Dubai royals lose dismissal case

Geoffrey Gibbs

A SECRETARY who lost her job working for the Dubai royal family in Britain has reached an undisclosed settlement with her former employers after claiming she was sacked for having a baby.

Brenda Maddock, aged 42, received numerous perks, including holidays and an interest-free loan to buy her London home, while helping look after the British interests of Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, a leading racehorse owner.

She claimed she was unfairly dismissed on returning from maternity leave.

Ms Maddock, who said her dismissal left her incapable of repaying the balance of the loan taken out to buy her home in West Hampstead, took her case to an industrial tribunal which opened in April and was to have resumed in Croydon, south London, yesterday. But a tribunal staff said they had confirmation that the case was settled on Wednesday night.

During the tribunal hearing Ms Maddock's former boss said his secretary had been granted two years' paid maternity leave, but had refused to return to work unless she was promoted to a senior management role.

Ms Maddock, a politics and economics graduate, began working for Sheikh Mohammed in September 1986, as personal assistant to John Leat, chief executive of Smech Management, the company that looks after the sheikh's racing and social affairs in Britain.

The tribunal heard that her



Ex-employer: Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum

'The job was interesting, exciting and fun and I will never be able to get another one like it'

Brenda Maddock, sacked secretary

duties included arranging VIP receptions at Royal Ascot, entertaining guests at cocktail parties and buying gifts for the sheikh to give to other Arab royals.

Her £20,000 salary was supplemented by annual "bungs" of up to £10,000, and perks including free use of Mayfair hotels, holidays in Dubai and at the sheikh's Scottish hunting lodge, and access to VIP enclosures at Royal Ascot.

The tribunal also heard that the sheikh paid for Ms Maddock's wedding and provided a £200,000 interest-free loan to enable her to buy her home. That was repaid with the annual cash bonuses.

"The job was interesting, exciting and fun and I will never be able to get another one like it," she told the tribunal. She needed to return to work to pay off the loan on

her house, but with the termination of the job she no longer had the ability to do so.

"It was standard procedure for me to receive a bonus at the end of the flat season at Ascot of up to £10,000 in cash," she said. "The payments were described as 'bungs'. There was no documentation and we did not have to sign for them. It was agreed that we could borrow against these future payments in order to assist our purchase of houses. It was always interest-free and I understood the company made all the arrangements."

Ms Maddock claimed that when she asked for maternity leave starting in December 1993 she was promised her job would be secure. But when she returned she found that Mr Leat planned to retain her replacement, Anna McDonald.

Her lawyers claimed that her letter of dismissal carried a veiled threat that she would lose her home if she took her case to a tribunal.

A spokesman for Ms Maddock's solicitors, Magrath and Co, said the terms of the settlement were subject to a confidentiality agreement.

Mr Leat was not available to comment, however a spokesman for the sheikh's UK interests stressed that the sheikh did not know Ms Maddock personally and was not involved in the industrial tribunal.

It is understood that the £117,000 balance of the loan on the West Hampstead property has been repaid. Although neither side was prepared to comment on the settlement it is believed Ms Maddock received the equivalent of one year's salary.



Dismissed: Brenda Maddock, who received an interest-free home loan from the sheikh

## Teenage girls 'as likely' to truant as boys

John Carroll  
Education Editor

TEENAGE girls are as likely as boys to play truant from school and leave without qualifications or prospects, according to a report published today from the Institute for Public Policy Research, a centre-left think tank.

It challenged the conventional view that boys have become the biggest problem in education. Too much attention was paid to the higher proportion of girls gaining good passes at GCSE and not enough to the long tail of under-achievers among whom girls and boys were almost equally represented, said the Wasted Youth report by Nick Pearce and Josh Hillman.

A government survey of 15-year-olds found that 5 per cent of girls and 4 per cent of boys admitted to persistent truanting, while 36 per cent of girls and 33 per cent of boys absconded occasionally.

The gender gap among under-achievers at GCSE was also small. Last year 65 per cent of girls and 66 per cent of boys failed at AS to gain a single pass at grade G or above. "These figures suggest that policies for tackling under-achievement should not be driven by stereotypes of disaffection which portray only boys as falling or being failed," said the report.

As many girls as boys were outside education, training or employment by the age of 17. "It is important to put the record straight: girls are just as likely to be socially excluded as boys. The roots of failure are far more complex, stretching back to early experience of school and family background. We need to ensure that strategies for tackling under-achievement and non-participation raise the tide to lift all boats," Mr Hillman said.

The report called for more pupil participation in decision-making at school to reduce disaffection and a reform of the curriculum for 14- to 18-year-olds. There should be a single framework for academic, vocational and work-based qualifications to help young people move back into education, it said.

## Police commander in Lawrence case denies corruption

Rory Carroll

A SENIOR police officer yesterday denied the Stephen Lawrence inquiry that he was corrupt and had tried to hinder the investigation into the teenager's racist murder.

Commander Raymond Adams said the timing of his permanent sick leave, shortly

after he became involved in the investigation, was coincidental. He wanted to remain in the Metropolitan police but was told to go sick by one of his superiors, deputy assistant commissioner David Omond.

Mr Adams admitted he had since taken up a full-time job outside the force.

He insisted he had never met Clifford Norris, the crim-

inal father of David, one of the five men suspected of stabbing Stephen at a bus stop in Eltham, south London, in April 1993.

Jeremy Gompertz, QC, counsel for the Metropolitan police, said: "The suggestion is that you are a corrupt, dishonest former police officer who did his best to slow down and stop the arrest of David Norris and others because of

your association with David Norris's father, Clifford. Is that true?"

Mr Adams: "I am one of the most decorated police officers in this country. To suggest that I knew Clifford Norris is nonsense. I see it as an insult to myself and to the Lawrence family. Mr Adams admitted having met a Scotland Yard chief superintendent at a pub last month to discuss

the "parameters" of his answers to the inquiry.

The meeting, on June 8, took place four days after Mr Adams first gave evidence to the inquiry, when his testimony was adjourned.

Initially, he insisted that he could not remember the name of the pub, its location or the name of the officer he had met.

But after prompting from

Mr Gompertz, Mr Adams recalled that the officer was a Chief Superintendent Wood, whom he met in the car park of The Star pub in Leatherhead, Surrey, before the pair entered the pub to continue their discussion.

Imran Khan, solicitor to the Lawrence family, is due to give evidence today, the 55th and final day of the first stage of the inquiry.

Dobson promises 7,000 more doctors, 15,000 extra nurses and big investment in hospitals and clinics, while ruling out patient charges

## Health organisations cautious over NHS recruitment pledges

David Brindley, Social Services Correspondent

HEALTH groups and unions reacted with caution and some scepticism after Frank Dobson, Health Secretary, yesterday promised that the NHS would recruit up to 7,000 more doctors and 15,000 more nurses before the next general election.

Giving more idea of how the Government would spend the £21 billion extra for the health service across Britain in the next three years, the minister also announced an extra 6,000 nurse training places and forehanded places in medical schools.

As a further consequence of the Government's comprehensive spending review, he said there would be "no new NHS patient charges in the lifetime of this parliament".

Mr Dobson's statement to the Commons contained less detail than had been expected. Opposition parties continued to question the real worth of the cash increase, which he said would help to fund "the biggest health crusade the country has seen since the NHS was born 50 years ago".

Ann Widdecombe, shadow health secretary, said the Government's three-year programme for England was in real terms worth £21 billion more than £25 billion under the last government.

Taking account of the costs of other policies, and of dealing with the millennium computer bug, the net gain came down to £25 million. In that light, she claimed £15 billion boost for England had "the dubious aroma of a dodgy accounting scam".

Mr Dobson told MPs that the extra money would have to be "tightly managed and

properly targeted" and would help to fund an £8 billion investment programme of new hospitals, clinics and GP surgeries. Over the next three years, more than 1,000 surgeries would be improved or rebuilt; 30 new hospitals were already planned and more would follow.

The £5 billion-plus modernisation fund, to be financed wholly by the cash increase, would pay for not only computer technology, but also health promotion, staff training and "modern and effective mental health services".

On charges for health services, he said the Government had spent a year analysing the arguments for asking patients to pay to see a GP, visit out-patients or to stay in hospital. "We utterly reject these ideas... Charges would be expensive to collect. Charges would glean little overall revenue. Most important,

charges would deny treatment to those who need it most."

Health groups welcomed this declaration — which meant there would be no new charges for travel vaccinations, a health department spokeswoman confirmed — but there were doubts about the promised recruitment of doctors and nurses.

The NHS is already committed to increasing the nurse student intake by 12.5 per cent this year and again next year, an overall rise of some 4,000 training places. It was unclear whether the promised 6,000 extra places added to this.

The increase, which started last year, will inevitably produce some 15,000 extra nurses — of the promised 15,000 extra nurses.

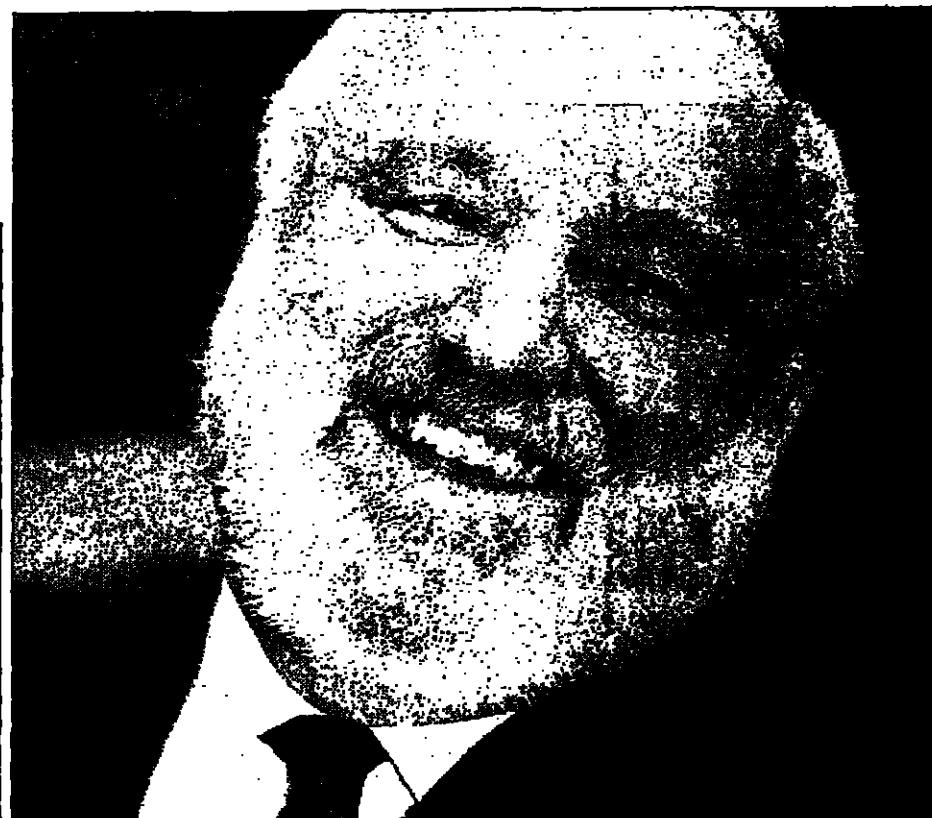
Christine Hancock, general secretary of the Royal College of Nursing, said there were 8,000 nursing vacancies. "It's

good news for patients that an extra 15,000 nurses are to be recruited to the health service, but my first question is: Where are these nurses going to come from if we don't tackle pay?"

Doctors' leaders also voiced anxiety. Professor George Albert, president of the Royal College of Physicians, said that with medical training taking up to six years "we will need to recruit many doctors until the most welcome increase in student numbers bears fruit".

Dr Ian Bogle, chairman of the British Medical Association, said the prospect of 7,000 extra doctors was promising. "But we will need to pin the Government down on where these doctors are coming from, whether these will be the senior posts we need and how they plan to entice these doctors back into the NHS."

Leader comment, page 13



Frank Dobson at Bart's hospital, London, yesterday

PHOTOGRAPH: MICHAEL STEVENS

## society

## MPs in secret session over Sandline affair

Ian Black  
Diplomatic Editor

MINISTERS were not involved in any conspiracy to breach the United Nations arms embargo on Sierra Leone, Robin Cook insisted yesterday as MPs went into secret session to look at evidence in the arms-to-Africa affair.

With only days before the end of a Whitehall inquiry into the controversy, a confident foreign secretary said he was certain that he and fellow ministers would be cleared in Sir Thomas Legg's report.

"I am expecting it to confirm what I know to be a matter of fact, that there was no ministerial involvement," he told the foreign affairs select committee. "It's something I

have said robustly on every occasion I have been asked. It happens to be the truth of the matter."

Mr Cook ordered the Legg inquiry after security consultants Sandline claimed to have Government approval to supply weapons — in breach of the UN embargo — to forces loyal to the deposed Sierra Leone president Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, who was later restored to power after a military counter-coup.

Customs and Excise have already decided not to prosecute Sandline.

The Legg report is thought likely to criticise the role played by Peter Penfold, British High Commissioner in Freetown, and recommend new procedures for routing documents round the FO.

But Mr Cook went out of his

way to praise the veteran diplomat for the "great heroism and dedication" he had displayed during the 1997 coup.

Mr Cook looked bemused as Labour MP Ernie Ross objected to questions from Tory Sir John Stanley, prompting a private session to discuss procedure. Sir John had been suggesting that officials in the military or Ministry of Defence had been pursuing a different policy to the FO.

Tories accused Mr Ross of filibustering, but he was also criticised by party colleagues: "Ernie Ross was trying to protect Robin Cook. It's absurd. Robin Cook doesn't need protection," said Diane Abbott.

Later the committee went into secret session to read a 50-page summary of 190 telegrams about the affair.

## EU needs constitution to counter euro: Ashdown

Michael White  
Political Editor

PADDY Ashdown last night urged the European Union to match its powerful new economic structures with a written constitution that provides a democratically accountable political counterweight.

"I am pro-Europe but clear about its limits and firm on its failings," the Liberal Democrat leader declared in a speech in London which drew accusations of rank hypocrisy against the pro-federalist Lib Dems from shadow foreign secretary Michael Howard.

The euro would "create an immensely powerful economic institution, set within an immensely weak and shambling political one," Mr

Ashdown said. "This will very quickly prove unsustainable. We will be forced by events, if we are not first forced by our own people, to strengthen our political institutions so as to contain and counter-balance it."

He spoke as Gordon Brown was finishing off his address to Rupert Murdoch's biennial corporate banquet for News Corporation executives in Idaho. Two years after Tony Blair's historic compromise with Mr Murdoch, the Chancellor will say Labour will not compromise its enthusiasm for the euro to placate the tycoon and his tabloids.

The Treasury will today launch its campaign to prepare British business for dealing in euros from next January, even while the UK remains outside the single

currency — tactics which Mr Ashdown deplored yesterday. Throughout the 42-year history of the EU, Britain had joined in too late, he said, and was poised to do the same with the euro. But its arrival, coupled with plans to enlarge the EU to include the new eastern democracies, made this the perfect time to draw up a political constitution.

He cited the need for decentralised power — so-called subsidiarity — transparency and freedom of information within what was "if not a federal structure, then a structure with clear federal qualities". It must grant citizens and member states "inalienable" rights that limited the power of the centre.

Leader comment, page 13; Wake-up for Ashdown, page 15

مكتبة مصر العامة

## London's history unearthed



'Monty Python's foot', a Roman terracotta oil lamp in the shape of a legionary's sandal, uncovered during the 10-mile Jubilee Line excavation

## Jubilee line work brings to light archaeological treasure trove

IT MAY be overdue and over budget, but London's Jubilee Line extension has proved an archaeological gold mine, yielding thousands of finds including Roman oil lamps and jewellery, a Chinese cannon, an Iron Age horse burial and the scorched floors of buildings torched in Boudicca's rebellion, writes Maeve Kennedy.

Skeletons were found all along the line, including hundreds of monks from the great lost Cistercian abbey at Stratford, and hundreds of women from a cemetery at Borough, said to be prostitutes from the

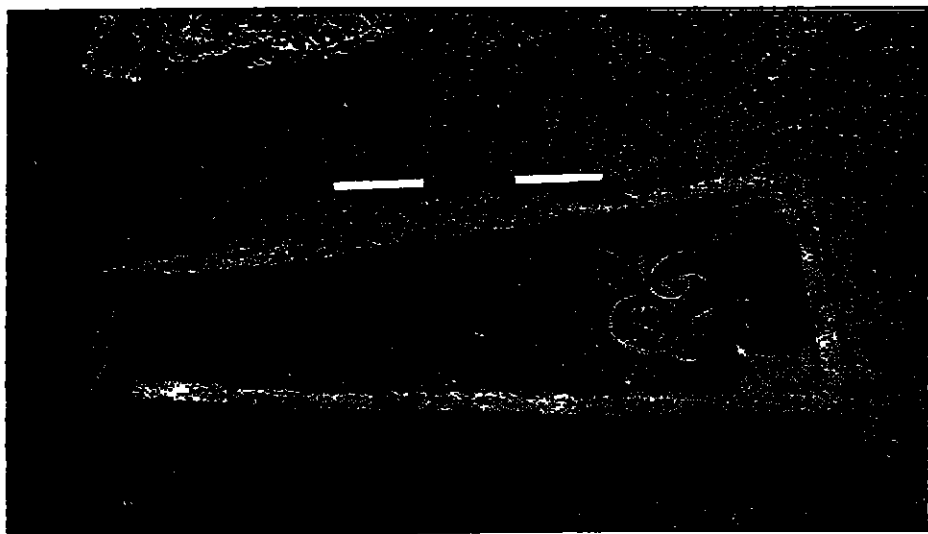
where the tunnelling machines went, the archaeologists followed — even devising a way of working inside the boring machines as shafts were being dug.

"This was a once in a lifetime opportunity — a once in a century opportunity," Al Green, from the Museum of London Archaeology Service, director of the dig, said yesterday.

Dr Green's favourite find is "the Monty Python foot", a Roman terracotta oil lamp made at a legionary military base in Holland, in the shape of a legionary's sandalled foot with the base its hobnailed sole.

"This is the most perfect one found in this country, but others have been found," he said. "We suspect it was the equivalent of going to Spain and bringing back a raffia donkey."

Full publication of the excavation will take years and eight volumes, but the most dramatic finds are described in a booklet, The Big Dig, launched by the transport minister, Glenda Jackson, last night at the Museum of London.



One of many skeletons unearthed, which included those of monks and prostitutes

## Law lords take gamble out of damages awards

Claire Dyer  
Legal Correspondent

VICTIMS of catastrophic accidents will get much bigger compensation awards in future, following a landmark ruling yesterday by the House of Lords.

The unanimous judgment by five law lords will mean hundreds of thousands of pounds more for the most seriously injured accident victims — those who will never be able to work or look after themselves and who depend on their compensation for living and care costs.

The ruling, anxiously awaited by lawyers and disability groups, reverses a decision of the Court of Appeal docking the damages awarded by High Court judges in three test cases.

The Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (A.P.I.L.) said the judgment was "a momentous step forward".

Awards for care are calculated to use the capital sum and any interest over the life

expectancy period. Until recently, it was assumed lump sums would be invested on the stock market, producing 4 to 5 per cent a year.

But lawyers for accident victims argued that it was less risky to invest the money in index-linked gilts — government stock. Because the rate of return was only about 3 per cent, they needed a bigger lump sum.

In the three test cases — brought on behalf of a car crash victim, a steelworker who had a white-hot steel bar penetrate his brain, and a child born with cerebral palsy — the High Court agreed. But the Court of Appeal disagreed and slashed the awards by up to a third. Yesterday the awards were largely restored.

Paul Kitson, a partner in the solicitors' firm Russell Jones & Walker, which represented the car victim and the steelworker, said: "Accident victims will now receive proper compensation. No longer will they be expected to gamble their damages on the stock market."

The judgment will be crucially important to hundreds of outstanding cases and to future big compensation claims in general, though it will mean higher insurers' costs and premiums.

Awards for the three victims still have to be worked out because the law lords made other slight changes.

Car victim Margaret Wells, now aged 64, was awarded £1.6 million by the High Court, reduced to £1.1 million by the Court of Appeal. She is expected to receive £1.6 million.

James Thomas, aged eight, who suffers from cerebral palsy because of a hospital blunder, was awarded £1.285 million, cut by £300,000. He is now expected to receive over £1.3 million.

Kelvin Page, now 31, had his original £906,000 award against Sheerness Steel reduced by £280,000, but will now get around £1 million.

The Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine, is expected to make new regulations to give effect to the law lords' judgment.

# Stand-off at Drumcree to cost £100m

John Mullin  
Ireland Correspondent

THE Drumcree crisis could drain as much as £100 million from the Northern Ireland economy in direct costs and lost revenue, according to latest estimates. It will be several months before the full financial impact of the Orange Order protest is clear.

The security operation at the Co Armagh church is likely to top the £10 million which the 1996 stand-off cost. The 1996 protest lasted five days, compared with 12 days already this year, which saw 800 extra troops needed to enforce the ban preventing the Portadown Orangemen from marching down the nationalist Garvaghy Road.

Most of the money goes on police overtime pay. Officers are also understood to have received several hours of specialised training. Support services, including catering and transport, account for about a quarter of the costs.

The other main direct cost will be compensation. More than 2,500 claims were lodged in 1996, amounting to more than £30 million.

Scores of Orange protesters are expected to seek damages after police opened fire with plastic bullets. More than 70 police suffered injuries, with four officers requiring plastic

surgery after they were hit by a blast bomb.

More than 140 houses have been firebombed, and 107 families, most Catholic, are being given new homes by the Housing Executive. There is no estimate yet of how much that will cost the taxpayer.

The repair bill for the 10 Catholic churches which were devastated by loyalist protesters even before the stand-off began will be at least £3 million. Three of the churches were destroyed. Several Orange Halls have also been attacked.

Lost revenue is also likely to be huge. Tourist chiefs predict the violent scenes flashed around the world will cost tens of millions of pounds this year — including up to £25 million in hotel and bed and breakfast trade cancellations.

Roy Ballie, chairman of Northern Ireland Tourist Board, said: "The loss at the peak in tourism of July and August is costing at least £40 million."

Next year's revenue will be hit if tour operators are unwilling to promote Northern Ireland. Most brochures are prepared in September, when memories of the clashes will still be fresh.

Inquiries were up 10 per cent for the first six months of this year. The tourist industry hoped that was the first step in recreating the boom in 1995, the first year after the IRA and loyalist paramilitar-

ies called their ceasefires. But it believes the Drumcree stand-off will have caused people to think again.

Orla Farren, spokeswoman for the tourist board, said: "There's no doubt this has done us some serious damage. People are losing sight of the fact that tourism could be the major industry in Northern Ireland."

Adam Ingram, Security Minister, said in the Commons on Wednesday that one overseas company which had been considering a multi-million-pound investment in Northern Ireland had got cold feet. Nigel Smyth, director of the CBI in Northern Ireland, said new inward investment brought in about £200 million each year. To lose even one could cost the economy £20 million.

Transport services were also badly hit. They may have lost as much as £1 million after loyalist roadblocks forced widespread cancellations for most of last week.

At Drumcree yesterday, only 10 Orangemen were allowed through the police cordons to sleep there — and the protest fell to three at one point. Orangemen plan a shift in tactics away from Drumcree, with a rally in Portadown planned for tonight. A presence would remain at the church until Orangemen were allowed to take their traditional route, a spokesman said.

# If someone told you that you could make your mortgage repayments whenever you could afford it, what would you say?

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- (b) You're in cloud cuckoo land
- (c) Yeah, sure. And I'm Lord Lucan
- (d) Where do I sign?

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## £22,000 fantasy



Fairies made using hatpins and cut-out drawings in one of the faked photos from 1917

Girls' faked fairy photos which revealed 'ectoplasmic thought forms' to Conan Doyle are snapped up at a fabulous price

John Ezard

**A**CELEBRATED photographic fake, which once deceived the creator of Sherlock Holmes, sold at auction in London yesterday for close to £22,000, more than four times its forecast price.

The Cottingly Fairy pictures began as a joke in 1917 by two Yorkshire girls, Elsie Wright, aged 15, and her cousin Frances Griffiths, aged 10, faked the creatures' bodies and diaphanous wings using hatpins, coloured cut-out

drawings and superimposition. But the author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle — who lost a son in the first world war and was exploring spiritualism to comfort himself — made them famous in magazine articles and a book published in 1922, *The Coming of The Fairies*.

He believed the photographs proved that "ectoplasmic thought forms" were coming from the girls' psychic auras. Elsie said they felt too sorry for him to confess the hoax. "I felt he was trying to comfort himself through unworldly things. It would have been

terrible for him to be destroyed by two little girls," she said.

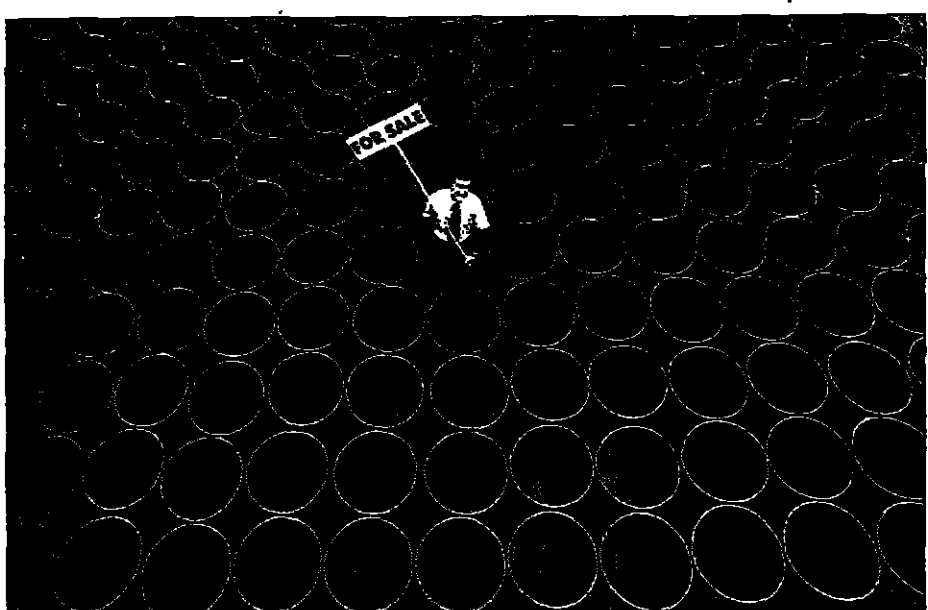
The women admitted the joke in 1982, although Frances maintained that one picture was of a real fairy. The collection containing the photos was sold at Sotheby's by her daughter, Christine Lynch. It included a first edition of Conan Doyle's book.

Mrs Lynch said: "I wish my mother had been here today to see the sale. She would have enjoyed it, she would have had great fun. She said she really saw the fairies and that is how it all came about. She was telepathic."

These relics of a faith in spiritualism, then widespread among bereaved relatives, were bought by Simon Finch, a London bookseller. He said he intended to sell them to collectors.



One of the Cottingly Fairy photographs from a collection which sold at auction in London yesterday for £21,620, more than four times the price predicted



Ronnie Mercer, managing director of Southern Water, with some of the thousands of water butts on sale at less than half price to encourage conservation of the season's bountiful rainfall. Local councils with the butts makers, T & D Plastics, are arranging first-come-first-served sales starting at Steyning, West Sussex, on July 28.

PHOTOGRAPH: ROGER BAMBER

## Scientists decipher DNA blueprint for syphilis

Tim Radford  
Science Editor

**S**CIENTISTS have worked out the blueprint for one of humanity's most sinister enemies — the bacterium that causes syphilis.

The complete DNA "recipe" for *Treponema pallidum*, the microbe that made its cruel mark on history, is published today in the US journal *Science*.

Teams from the University of Texas in Houston and the Institute of Genomic Research in Maryland have deciphered the entire 1.4 million letter "alphabet" of a disease that has always been notoriously difficult to diagnose, treat or prevent.

Anthony Fauci, director of the US National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Dis-

eases, called the publication "an extraordinary boost for efforts to develop a protective vaccine".

In the past year, genetic researchers have revealed the DNA blueprints for a number of old enemies, including the tuberculosis and stomach ulcer bugs.

Syphilis has been under control in many countries since the development of penicillin, but it raged across Europe in the 16th century, lacerating beggars and royalty alike, in the decades after the European discovery of the Americas.

Its origin is still one of the long-standing mysteries of medicine, but the microscopic monster eventually became a scourge which afflicted victims stealthily at first but which often ended in insanity or death.

It seemed to show fiendish

skill in overcoming the human immune system. It remains a major cause of illness and death around the world: people infected by it are also at extra risk of HIV infection. It affects 9,000 people a year in the US, and infections have increased dramatically in the countries of the former Soviet Union.

Now scientists have a map of the proteins that might prove to be the microbe's weak points. "The genome sequence represents an encyclopedia of information on this elusive bacterium," said George Weinstock, of the University of Texas, who led the team that completed the work.

"We can now figure out ways to disarm its defences through vaccines, identify it quickly through new diagnostic tests and eliminate it with specific, targeted antibiotics."

## ME accepted as debilitating 'real disease'

Sarah Boseley  
Health Correspondent

**C**HRONIC fatigue syndrome, or ME, came in from the cold yesterday when the Chief Medical Officer, Sir Kenneth Calman, said in public that it was "a real entity, distressing, debilitating", and that it affected many people.

His words and the new working group on ME (myalgic encephalomyelitis) and its treatment, which he announced, were greeted with gratitude by patients' groups who long felt they were crying in the wilderness, ignored by the medical establishment.

Naomi Wayne, chief executive of Action for ME, welcomed Sir Kenneth's view that patient groups had a role to play alongside doctors and scientists. "I am delighted to hear the positive comments about the patient organisations," she said. "That is a real breakthrough."

Most doctors have not known what to do about those suffering from the disease, she said, and their conventional medical approach, often involving passing patients to psychologists for cognitive behaviour therapy, did not help most people.

At a briefing on ME, Ms Wayne asked Sir Kenneth to understand "how bitter members feel at being bullied and forced into something they don't believe in". Patients often thought the therapy unhelpful and even able to make them worse, she said.

She added that Action for ME had amassed a great deal of evidence from sufferers but that institutions, such as the Royal College of Psychiatrists, which produce or a major report on ME, had not listened to them. "It is little short of a crying scandal that we are still fighting to get our foot in the door," she said.

Sir Kenneth, chairing the briefing, which looked at the latest research by the Linbury Trust, set up by Lord Salisbury to fund work on ME, said that the help of the

patient groups was more than welcome in the fight against a disease now recognised to affect as many as 0.5 per cent of the population in some areas. The disease was, he said, "a significant challenge to the medical professions and, because it's a problem for individuals, it's a problem, too, for the community".

Alan McGregor, professor of medicine at Kings College Hospital, said the Linbury Trust was trying "to bring the disease to a respectability often felt to be lacking". It was "a significant cause of disability", widespread geographically and across social class. "The idea that this is a disease of so-called yuppies is completely erroneous. It affects anyone."

For the moment, nobody has identified a single cause of ME. Viral infections are being studied as are changes in the immune system, and psychosocial factors, but scientists are unsure whether these are possible causes or effects of ME. Symptoms include myalgia, muscle weakness and malaise after exercise over at least six months.

ME may have been always with us, according to Stephen Straus, head of the laboratory of clinical investigation in the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases in Bethesda, in the United States. In the 19th century, it was called febricula or "the vapours". In the 1880s, people were said to suffer from neurasthenia. Between the two world wars, former soldiers were diagnosed with "effort syndrome" or battle fatigue.

In the 1930s, other people were said to have neurocardiogenicasthenia — a nervous disorder affecting the heart, and in the 1950s, it was chronic brucellosis, which doctors believed was caused by a virus contracted from livestock. By the 1970s, there were diagnoses of hypoglycaemia and total allergy syndrome. By the 1980s, there was talk of fatigue problems caused by Epstein Barr virus, fibromyalgia and mitral valve prolapse.

## Lager a rip-off in London at £2.12 a pint, says Camra

**T**HE price of a pint of beer went up by nearly 5 per cent last year, and the average pint of lager now costs £2.12, a survey by the Campaign for Real Ale (Camra) found.

Lager drinkers in London, where a pint costs £2.12 — up 6.7 per cent on last year — are the worst off, according to the study. Real ale costs an average £1.92 a pint.

Mel Taylor, Camra's prices watchdog, said: "London's lager prices are a rip-off. The cost of a pint has risen more than twice as fast as inflation. You're better off drinking real ale in London; if you know where to look you can find it for 99p a pint."

Around the country a pint of real ale costs on average £1.71. The North-west remains the cheapest place to drink, at £1.47 for a pint of real ale.

In the West Midlands the average price of a pint of beer stayed the same at £1.55.

Ms Taylor said pub prices had risen by only as much as the rate of inflation, for the third year running. "If the Government hadn't increased beer tax the price of a pint would hardly be up at all."

Smaller, independent breweries continued to provide the best value for money, Camra found, while the cost of a pint of cider fell by 2.9 per cent.

## Dobson pledges aid for child deportees

Lucy Ward  
Political Correspondent

**T**HE Government will consider issuing an apology to more than 100,000 people sent from this country as children to orphanages in former colonies, the Health Secretary Frank Dobson pledged last night.

He also pledged to seek help with benefits and legal aid for those adults deported from orphanages and children's homes, mainly to Australia and New Zealand, under a forced emigration scheme sanctioned by the Government.

Mr Dobson gave his assurances to the Commons health select committee, which is investigating the fate of the so-called child migrants and examining ways in which they can be offered recompense, in cash or other assistance, for their treatment.

Charities including Barnardo's and the Children's Society acted as agencies shipping off more than 100,000 children, often without their parents' knowledge or consent. The scheme, continuing over several decades and end-

ing only in 1967, was intended to give them a chance of a better life, but a further motive was the desire to populate Commonwealth countries with "pure white stock".

Mr Dobson, called by the committee for its final evidence session before publishing its recommendations, pledged to look "very sympathetically" at its findings, but stepped back from pledging

**100,000 children were shipped off, often without their parents' consent**

extra funds to compensate the former migrants.

However, he acknowledged that the Government had an obligation to help the migrants, many of whom were given new names when sent abroad and denied details of their birth parents. He said: "Where it comes to people who were in effect reassigned as children to be taken to another country, and where they have difficulty finding out about who they

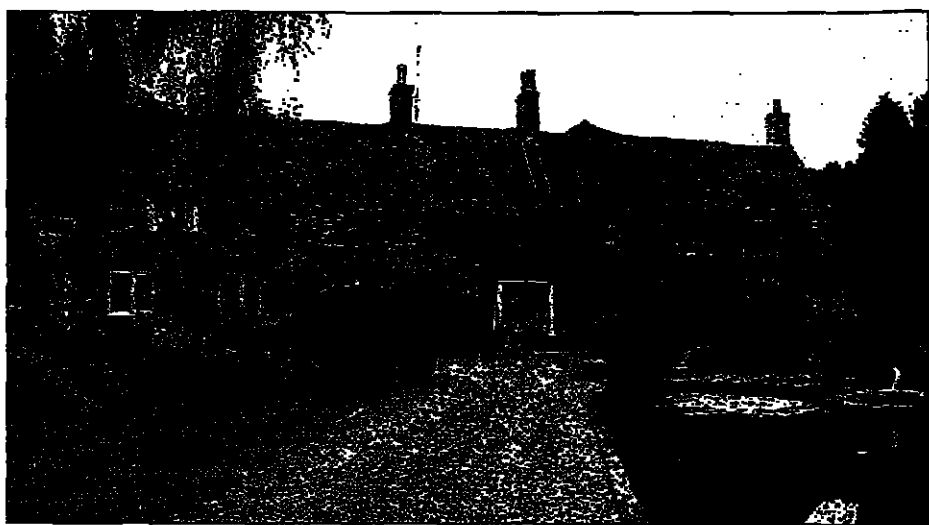
were and who their parents were and how all this came to be, I think we do have an obligation."

That obligation would involve working with overseas governments in receiving countries, the agencies which sent children abroad, and those which received them, he told the committee.

Told by the Labour MP Ann Jensen that many child migrants were "looking for an apology from the British government for their role in this whole scandal", Mr Dobson promised: "I rule nothing out. We will respond in a sympathetic way to whatever the committee recommends."

MPs are also pressing for an investigation of whether the Government provided money to maintain children in overseas institutions. Many of those sent to children's homes run by organisations including the Roman Catholic Christian Brothers have spoken of severe physical and mental abuse by those charged with their care.

Although health department civil servants said they had no knowledge of such subverts, Mr Dobson promised to investigate detailed allegations.



The home causing the dispute between Tony and Shirley Lawrence PHOTOGRAPH: TREVOR PORTER

## Desire to split 17th century listed house divides warring couple over path of their future happiness

Maeve Kennedy

**A**HOUSE divided against itself cannot stand, the Bible warns, and in the Wiltshire village of Heytesbury, the neighbours are muttering darkly about the fate of just such a home.

Tony and Shirley Lawrence have owned the handsome, 17th century listed property for some years, but their relationship is not as it was. Mrs Lawrence has applied for planning permission to split the house in two, bricking up two ground-level doors and another on an upper floor. Mr Lawrence, a construction site manager, still lives

in the larger part of the house. He says he and a neighbour own the strip of land Mrs Lawrence would need for access — but she will not be allowed to cross them. He described the application as "a very frivolous attempt to destroy a listed building". She has refused to comment.

The house has changed little from its depiction in an 1805 engraving, when it belonged to a renowned local archaeologist. The picture shows the family under a tree that still shades the house — the three daughters of William Connington, a landowner and antiquary who investigated hundreds of barrows

and monuments near Stonehenge. The parish council and many of the villagers oppose any change. A parish council spokesman said they had tried to stay out of the row, but felt splitting the house would ruin it. District councillors have postponed a decision until later this month, and are awaiting further detailed drawings and photographs.

Andrew Vines, a conservation officer in Wiltshire, has suggested a compromise — locking and retaining the doors and plastering them over on the inside, which would preserve at least the illusion of a happily united household.

online

Every Thursday in the

The Guardian

Barnardo's urges law change to re-label punters and pimps as abusers □ Men 'selling and controlling children without fear of prosecution'

# Charity calls for child prostitutes' protection

Helen Carter

**Y**OUNG girls coerced into prostitution by men should be protected not prosecuted, according to the children's charity Barnardo's.

In a campaign launched yesterday, it said men were selling, controlling and abusing children in Britain without fear of prosecution, while victims risked being cautioned and convicted despite their age. It was largely a hidden abuse often occurring in flats and bedsits.

Barnardo's wants legislation to re-label those involved as abusers, child sex offenders and abusers, instead of prostitutes, punters and pimps. At present, men who seek sex with children

are rarely charged with anything but kerb-crawling.

Michael Jarman, director of children's services at Barnardo's, said: "In all other instances where a man has sex with a child, it is child abuse. But because money is exchanged between two men, children are being labelled as prostitutes. Men are controlling, coercing, assaulting, raping and, in extreme cases, torturing children. The legal system is failing to effectively prosecute these men."

The campaign was introduced by Baroness Helena Kennedy QC, who said: "Labelling children as common prostitutes continues to confirm the misconception of the less deserving, even under-servicing, victim, which perpetuates and exacerbates this form of child abuse."

According to a year's

research by Barnardo's, 48 children's agencies had been in touch with at least 267 abused girls aged under 16, and 328 between 16 and 18.

Although the true extent of the problem is not known, the involvement of children under 17 and 18 in luring and soliciting offences increased by 51 per cent between 1993 and 1996.

Barnardo's report, *Whose Daughter Next?*, identifies a pattern of men who lure girls, many of whom have already been abused as children, into their clutches. The abuser is often aged between 18 and 25 and will seek out a girl aged between 12 and 14, creating dependency. Initially the girl is impressed by her "boyfriend's" wealth and good looks, and he lavishes clothes and jewellery on her.

After they form a sexual

relationship he becomes more and more possessive, deciding what she wears, whom she sees and what she eats. In extreme cases, Barnardo's has found girls locked up and forced to go to the toilet in a cardboard box. Despite the abuse, the victim blames herself. When the abuser has his willing victim she is forced to have sex with a "friend" of his to prove her love.

Barnardo's SALS (Street and Lane) project in Bradford has helped more than 100 girls aged 12 to 17 abused through prostitution.

After reports about child prostitution appeared in local newspapers, one girl was approached by a man who shouted from his car window: "Where are the 11- and 15-year-olds?" When she said she was 14 he replied: "You'll do."

Sara Swann, the charity's

development officer who set up the Bradford project four years ago, said men should be ashamed to admit they wanted sex with children.

"We are starting to understand and can offer services to these vulnerable children who have suffered horrible levels of abuse. We encourage these children to come and meet us. They are incredibly needy but pretend they can handle it."

Barnardo's wants the Home Office and the Department of Health to form an inter-departmental ministerial task force for the problem, which would involve the Crown Prosecution Service.

The report advises reviewing the maximum sentence for unlawful sexual intercourse and altering the 1990 Indecency With Children Act to cover 14- and 15-year-olds.



Barnardo's offers help to children who have been coerced into selling sex. PHOTOGRAPH: BARNARDO'S

## Dobson pledges new deal for children in care

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

**M**INISTERS yesterday promised a new deal for children in care as an all-party committee of MPs said central government must bear its share of the blame for their "horrendous" treatment.

Lack of funding for children's services, and lack of proper attention to children's issues at Westminster, meant ministers could not pin all the blame on local authority social services, the Commons health select committee concluded.

Since 1994 the Department of Health had been in breach of its statutory responsibility

by not issuing an annual report on the Children Act. "It should not have been necessary for us to remind the DoH of its duty to obey the law," the committee said.

Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, told the Commons that arrangements for children in care had "far too frequently been deplorable".

The Government was determined to give them a new deal, he said. The money would come from the £3 billion extra being provided for social services over the next three years.

The committee's report will delight social services departments, reeling from government criticism over scandals

involving abuse of children in care. Roy Taylor, president of the Association of Directors of Social Services, welcomed the "frankness" of the report. He said it was now widely accepted that the Children Act had been introduced "without sufficient thought to its financial implications".

The committee said the high-profile abuse cases reflected a wider problem of neglect of the 51,000 children in care, many of whom left with more problems than they started with.

The number of care-leavers who end up unemployed, homeless and involved in crime was horrendous, the MPs said. The lack of educa-

tional provision and support was "scandalous".

Social services departments had lacked the funding to invest in preventive work with families to stop children from being taken into care.

"The failure to commit sufficient resources to implement the pioneering provisions of the Children Act represents an abdication of social responsibility."

It also represented a false economy, the report said, as "it costs four times as much

to keep a child in a residential home for a year as to send him to Eton".

The committee urged the Government to appoint a children's rights commissioner and require social services departments to make available an independent visitor for every child in care who would benefit.

It also backed calls for more children's homes, as an alternative to foster care, and for action to head off a crisis in recruiting foster carers.



Artist Damien Hirst's theme restaurant with a contentious name, from outside (above) and in. It is likely to become The Pharmacy Restaurant and Bar. PHOTOGRAPH (below): JOHN REARDON

Hirst relents in row with pharmacists over 'illegal' eatery name

John Eazard

**T**HE artist Damien Hirst, who displays dissected and pickled animals in art galleries, is on the verge of surrender to the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, it emerged last night.

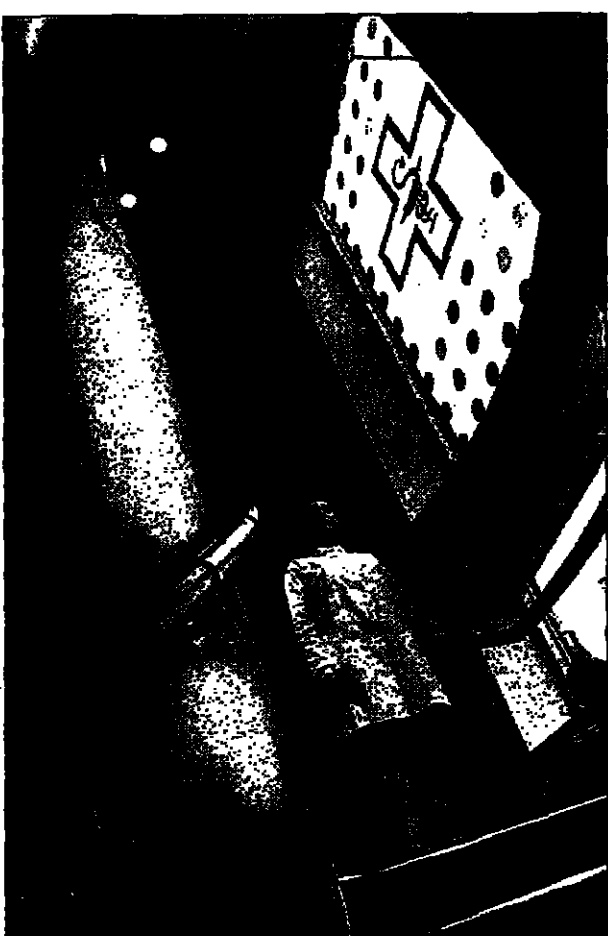
Threats of legal action have forced him and his partners to agree to change the name of Pharmacy, their theme restaurant in Notting Hill, west London.

It is expected to become The Pharmacy Restaurant and Bar, after fears that its present name might "open the floodgates" to a spate of non-medical shops and bars.

The agreement, likely to be announced early next week, had rankled with Mr Hirst. "Damien has said he wanted to call us The Aggro instead - but we managed to persuade him that was not the best course of action," said Liam Carson, a director of Pharmacy.

The green pharmacy sign will come down, but it will be allowed to keep some of the array of pills, syringes and suppositories on show in its windows and interior.

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society, which represents and registers high street chemists, claimed during a five-month dispute that unauthorised use of "pharma-



cy" and "pharmacist" was illegal under the 1968 Medicines Act. The restaurateurs faced a £1,000 fine and repeated prosecutions.

Stephen Latener, the society's head of pharmaceutical law, said the issue was serious. "Pharmacists often

get people dragged in off the street because they have an epileptic fit or have been taken ill in other ways.

"If we had turned a blind eye... real pharmacists could have become as confusingly difficult to find as needles in haystacks."

◀ "It is hard to imagine the Premiership fixture list finding room in mid-season for a festival at Highbury or Old Trafford - cricket moves at a different pace."

Jamie Reid on the Cheltenham cricket festival

Sport98, page 8

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Film and taboo

# Israeli triumph for Holocaust comedy

Julian Borger in Jerusalem

I had the makings of an all-time cinematic disaster. A romantic comedy about the Holocaust made by an Italian gentleman was to be screened at all places, the Jerusalem Film Festival. But Roberto Benigni's film, *Life is Beautiful*, has been the surprise hit of the summer, provoking a rethink of Israeli taboos.

No one was more surprised than the actor-director himself. Mr Benigni said he was unsure whether he would be fêted or driven out of town after a screening earlier this week. He set in the cinema nervously gauging the Jewish audience's response to his whimsical fable of Guido, an Italian Jewish bookseller imprisoned in a Nazi concentration camp.

The first half of the film, set in Arrezzo in Mussolini's Italy, is almost pure slapstick as Guido runs through a repertoire of visual gags to win the heart of an aristocratic woman, Dora, unappetisingly engaged to a Fascist functionary.

In the second half, late in the war, the Germans have taken over the town and Guido's new family is transported to a death camp. The backdrop turns darker but the comedy continues as Guido tries to shield his son from the horror around them by convincing him that the camp is an elaborate game, in which points are won against the guards by staying hidden and concealing fear. The prize, he promises, will be a life-size military tank.

The cinema turned deathly quiet as the film went on, but as the final credits began to roll the crowd broke into an emotional ovation, which organisers described as unprecedented for the festival.

"It hits you in that spot between comedy or tragedy when you don't know whether to laugh or cry. People afterwards just wanted to come up to him and thank him. Personally I think it's one of the finest films ever made," said Judith Langer, the festival co-ordinator.

Mr Benigni has since been awarded the Jerusalem Award from the city's mayor, Ehud Olmert, which the Italian director described as "my real Oscar". Judging the Grand Jury Prize the film won at Cannes.

"I kiss you on the mouth, everybody," an excited Mr Be-

gnigni told an adoring Israeli crowd. He said that although he was not Jewish, his family had experience of the Holocaust when his father was deported to a Nazi labour camp.

"My father's stories had a comical spirit to them, since he did not want to sadden us. He saw the ridiculous and funny side of things, and did not describe the Germans with deep hatred. These stories influenced me."

There has been the occasional brickbat. During a question-and-answer session after the screening, an Italian Jewish philosophy student, Ariela DiCastro, berated Mr Benigni for revisionism: "It's dangerous to laugh at the Holocaust," she told him, but she was opposed by much of the audience.

Mr Benigni later told journalists: "Who said that it is forbidden to make a comedy about the Holocaust? In my eyes, comedy is no less important than tragedy, and it is entitled to deal with any topic, and has always done so."

An influential commentator, Nahum Ingber, writing in the Yediot Aharanot newspaper, agreed that the Italian director had somehow managed to skip over the abyss of bad taste into which the film might easily have fallen.

Issues such as cheapening the Holocaust, and cynical use of the Holocaust for commercial purposes, appeared on the agenda almost automatically. However, as soon as the first screenings of the film were made, it became apparent to Benigni that he had managed to break through the viewers' emotional barriers," Mr Ingber wrote.

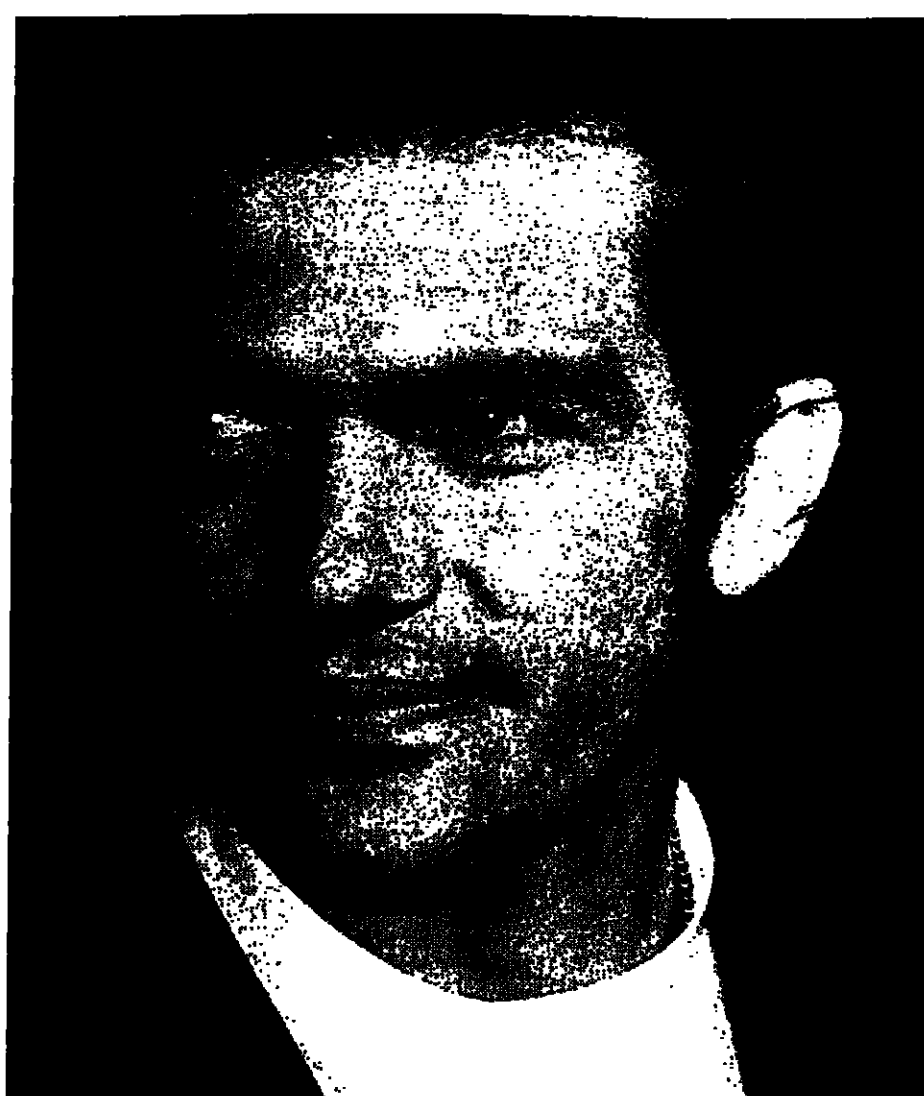
Some of the Jerusalem audience said that *Life is Beautiful* may face a tougher test when it faces the wider Israeli public on general release in the coming weeks. British and other European audiences may also be less susceptible to its sentimentality.

Greville Janner, the chairman of the London-based Holocaust Educational Trust, said Holocaust survivors and their families should be the film's ultimate arbiters.

"If they believe it is acceptable and fine, then the producer has achieved something extraordinary," Lord Janner said. "We should not forget that Schindler's List was the best Holocaust education film ever made. So we should be grateful... provided that the survivors accept it."



Ataturk, the charismatic leader who forged modern Turkey after the first world war, and Antonio Banderas, the actor 'put off' playing him after getting Greek hate letters



## Ataturk star beats retreat in face of Greek hardliners

Joanna Coles in New York

APPARENTLY scared off by a campaign of pressure, the actor Antonio Banderas has pulled out of a big-budget film in which he was to portray Ataturk, the founder of modern Turkey.

Angry Greek-Americans sent Banderas more than a thousand letters claiming that the enigmatic figure who forged a nation out of the ruined Ottoman empire was nothing but a rapist, murderer, child molester

and destroyer of Greek civilisation.

According to Mr Banderas's agent, the actor decided he wanted to direct all his energies towards the making of another film, *Phantom of the Opera*. But those involved with the Ataturk project — including Tarquin Olivier, son of Sir Laurence Olivier, who is responsible for raising the film's \$25 million budget (\$15 million) — said the film star had been overwhelmed by the letters strongly urging him to abandon the role.

"Obviously he was very put off by these letters," Mr Olivier told the New York Times, adding that his own contacts in the Greek community assured him it was only a minority of people who were reacting so strongly against artistic freedom.

"It's motivated by a feeling of hatred not only towards Ataturk but towards Turkey in general," he explained. "I'm very much hoping we can make him see this."

A leading article in the

Long Island Greek-American paper claimed this week that many Greeks in the United States were cringing in embarrassment at the campaign against the film. The paper said it made the community look like "ethnic hysterics" showing up their "chauvinism and narrow mindedness".

The letter-writing campaign began after it was reported in one of the US community's ethnic newspapers that Banderas was considering the role. One paper published a letter

from a reader insisting Mustafa Kemal Ataturk was a "savage maniac" and "a disgrace to human civilisation as we know it".

Their antagonism rests in part on Ataturk's ejection, after the first world war, of Greek forces which had invaded Anatolia. Later he followed a peaceful policy towards neighbouring Greece and at one time relations between the two countries were so good that in 1934 the Greek prime minister, Elythérios Venizelos, actually nominated

Ataturk for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Mr Olivier, whose wife Zelfa was born in Turkey, said he had hoped to make the movie along the same lines as the David Lean film *Gandhi*, not only chronicling the life of one man but also unfolding the history of an entire country. Bruce Beresford, whose work includes *Driving Miss Daisy*, had agreed to direct. Yesterday Mr Olivier was bound for Hollywood to see if he could rescue the situation.

## World Bank calls in fraud team

Martin Kettle in Washington

THE head of the World Bank has hired a team of investigators to examine allegations of corruption and embezzlement against bank officials in Washington. James Wolfensohn has confirmed that he has established a special internal fraud team to look into the allegations, and that accountants Price Waterhouse are among three outside teams now combing some of the bank's books.

Among the projects under scrutiny are World Bank-funded schemes in Russia, Japan and Indonesia, countries at the centre of the international financial crisis. Two unnamed individuals have been notified that they are under suspicion. A third, a former World Bank official named Fritz Rodriguez, is being sued by the bank in connection with a water utility project in Algeria.

The Australian-born Mr Wolfensohn has built a reputation as a scourge of corrupt dealings since he became the bank's president in 1995. He said this week the inquiries were because "if the bank were going to campaign against corruption in our borrowing countries, we had to be absolutely certain that we held ourselves to the highest standards on the inside".

The World Bank is an agency of the United Nations which lends money to governments and to private bodies for development projects. It gets its money from loans



A fish that has surprisingly managed to survive in Sri Lanka's heavily polluted Beire lake is snapped up yesterday. The World Bank launched a \$7.5 million project this week to clean the lake up

from more than 180 UN member states and by borrowing on the money markets. Its current annual spending totals \$25 billion (\$15 billion).

In a statement Mr Wolfensohn said: "While I have no reason to believe there is a widespread problem in the bank, even one case is one too many." Law suits could result from the investigations, he said.

"The question is, 'Are we clean?' and it's not clear," said the bank's president for external affairs, Mark Malloch Brown. "There are a number of ongoing investigations where there is alarming information on the face of it and it needs full investigation."

The bank had received tips about corruption from its own employees and from gov-

ernment officials in countries with bank-funded projects.

The allegations come as the Republican majority in the United States Congress is refusing to authorise increased payments to the bank and its sister International Monetary Fund unless President Clinton stipulates the money will not go to countries with liberal abortion laws.

## 16 years for selling poison gas chemicals to Iran

Julian Borger in Tel Aviv

ISRAEL'S most controversial treason trial in more than 10 years came to a dramatic close yesterday when Nahum Manbar was sentenced to 16 years' imprisonment for supplying Iran with the chemicals and know-how to make poison gas.

As the presiding judge, Amnon Strashnov, read out the sentence, pandemonium broke out in the Tel Aviv district court. Photographers leaped over seats to record the defendant in a

sensational trial which had mutated from a spy-drama to a sex-scandal.

Manbar's lawyers said they would appeal to the supreme court, arguing that Judge Strashnov was unfit to try the case because he was having an affair with a young member of the defence team.

The defence also claimed the prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, on the verdict. The claims have been vehemently denied by Mr Netanyahu. Judge Strashnov and his alleged mistress, Pnina Yauai.

Manbar, a stocky 51-year-old businessman, listened impassively in the dock as the judge read out his crimes, including the sale to the Iranian government of large quantities of chemical precursors for mustard gas and nerve gas.

At the end of a 10-hour hearing, during which he was reduced to tears, Manbar said: "I made a mistake but the mistake did not stem from any will to harm the state of Israel."

Judge Strashnov said: "Our impression of the accused is completely negative. We have convicted him

of the most grievous security offences, namely aiding the enemy in its war against Israel and passing on information with the intention of damaging state security."

Manbar shouted to his brother Zvi as he was taken away: "Everything will be all right. We will appeal."

Mr Netanyahu praised the court decision, saying: "The court did the right thing. This was a very serious challenge to national security. An Israeli citizen provided the material of death to an Iranian regime that is committed to our destruction."

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## Beijing's ex-mayor faces trial

John Gittings on a lurid affair gripping China's popular press

**A** FORMER mayor of Beijing will finally be tried for corruption in a sensational affair that has gripped the popular Chinese press. Chen Xitong, whose case has been pending since 1996, is charged with "corruption and dereliction of duty" according to a statement yesterday from the national prosecutors' office.

It is not known whether the trial will be held in public; many believe this could prove

The Chen case is believed to have potentially explosive ramifications, which may explain the long delay. It took two and a half years of investigation before the party's disciplinary commission expelled Mr Chen last September.

He wielded great influence in awarding contracts to foreign developers, offending other party leaders by failing to consult them on the Oriental Plaza project in central Beijing, financed by the Hong Kong tycoon Li Ka-shing.

His son, Chen Xiaotang, was sentenced to 12 years in jail last August, after being found guilty of taking large bribes from foreign contractors as deputy manager of a large Beijing hotel. The son's mistress is said to be on the run with part of the proceeds.

The magazines may be part of an inspired campaign to make sure Mr Chen is not let off lightly. He and his wife occupied several flats in Beijing but otherwise profited less visibly than his subordinates.

Some observers believe he was a threat, as party boss in Beijing, to the rise of President Jiang Zemin. Mr Jiang was from Shanghai and had few allies in the capital.

Chinese public opinion is divided on the Chen affair. Many regarded the delay in bringing him to trial as further proof that the party protects corruption at the highest level. Others believe he has been charged only because he belongs to a losing political faction.

Putting Mr Chen on trial reflects the new emphasis on the "rule of law" being promoted by Mr Jiang. China's first televised trial last week has been officially hailed as a step towards greater legal transparency.

But a foreign ministry spokesman in Beijing yesterday condemned "foreigners [who] raise the matter of alleged violations with the younger sister of his wife who is herself accused of corruption."

A popular jingle parodies the "Four Principles" of the Communist Party: "Always eat other people's food; never buy your own drink; always save your wages; and don't stick to your own wife."



'Chen Xitong and his women' is the cover story of this Beijing magazine, whose headline reads: 'The people shed tears while officials engage in lewd pleasure'



Postal workers, stripped to the bare essentials, demonstrate for higher wages in front of a Madras post office yesterday. India's government said later that an eight-day strike had ended after it promised workers a sympathetic hearing. The strike by 550,000 workers had brought chaos to a service which handles 40 million letters and parcels a day

## General calls for rapid transition

Alex Duval Smith in Kaduna, central Nigeria

**G**ENERAL Ibrahim Babangida, the former Nigerian dictator and one of the closest advisers to the present regime, yesterday called for democratic elections, overseen by the military, to be held in the next six to nine months.

He views, in an exclusive interview with the Guardian, are a clear pointer to the shape of the transition programme, which is expected to be announced by the military ruler, General Abdulsalam Abubakar, in the next few days.

The transition, Gen Babangida foresees — revealed here for the first time — is likely to be welcomed by the international community, keen to do business again with Africa's most populous country. But its form, which includes a continued role for the military, will displease Nigerian pro-democracy groups.

Speaking in Kaduna — a city whose name means "crocodiles" in Hausa and which is the retirement haven of several Nigerian military leaders — Gen Babangida, aged 57, rejected proposals for a civilian transitional government.

Under those proposals, put forward by pro-democracy groups who believe an overnight transition to democracy is unrealistic, a government of national

unity would be installed on October 1 — the date given by the late General Sani Abacha for the passage to civilian rule. After wide consultations, such a government would move towards democratic elections within four or five years.

But Gen Babangida, speaking calmly and carefully, occasionally breaking his sentences with a gap-toothed grin, said: "There is nothing sacrosanct about October 1. There have been calls for a national government of unity and reconciliation but the basic question is how do you form such a government?"

"Are we talking about inviting El Hadji X or Chief TY to me, if we are asking for democracy, this is not the way forward. The international community has a better idea — elections."

It was Gen Babangida who nullified the 1993 elections, believed to have been won by Chief Moshood Abiola, who died last week, four years after he was detained by Abacha.

"I would not have jailed Chief Abiola," Gen Babangida said. "He broke the law by declaring himself president. I would have sent him to a prison. There was also used to joke that if Abiola had come to me when I was in power and said, 'I am the president,' I would have said, 'Sure, but I am the head of state.'"

Gen Babangida maintains that the 1993 elections, considered by many to have been the fairest Nigeria has known, contained "too many irregularities". He said: "There was a man who could not give you an articulate position on anything. Abacha was a good number three to me, as chief of defence staff and minister of defence. He was loyal to me personally but, you know, people who fail

in life change themselves and become born again to cover up their own shortcomings."

Although Gen Babangida is now close to the seat of power, he said he did not envisage running for president. "The people still see me as a soldier. Military governments are outdated. He believes the five parties set up by Abacha to ensure his appointment as civilian president should be scrapped. "We all know why they were created and that reason no longer exists. People should be allowed freely to create their own parties."

He said the transition process could be completed in "six to nine months". The ideal president would "be able to speak for all Nigerians". He added: "He would be commander-in-chief of the army, so he would have to have an understanding of the military — so we could do business with him."

Gen Babangida said Abacha's days as leader had been numbered when he died. "Abubakar is trying to unwind all the belligerence of Abacha. The international community has seen that it is time we were allowed back into the Commonwealth and I think it will happen. "Everyone knows who the political prisoners are and I am sure only bureaucratic problems are delaying their release."



Gen Babangida remains deeply influential in the running of Nigeria and once boasted that he had played a role in all but the first of 10 coups since independence in 1960. Although he is no longer in government, he is still close to Gen Abubakar. They are from the same town, Minna in central Nigeria, and were childhood friends.

## Police hunt serial killer of gays

Christopher Zinn in Sydney

**P**OLICE suspect that these gruesome murders of young men were the work of a serial killer stretching back 10 years to look for him.

Arnell, former lord mayor of Wollongong, 50 miles south of Sydney, was a gay witness summoned by a royal commission into police corruption and sexual abuse in a network of paedophiles.

The steel city's favourite son died a double life, according to tapes of a boy-sex racket given to the commission. Most of the charges laid against Arnell last year were thrown out during a criminal hearing, but four charges, including buggery of young

men, were due to be heard. On June 26, someone Arnell may have invited into his home killed him with a hammer and rained a Rotary club badge into his eyes. "The murder came two weeks after the killing nearby of David O'Hearn, aged 60. He was decapitated, dismembered and sexually mutilated. He had no known gay life but police marked his case file "possible homosexual hate crime".

A leading forensic psychologist, Tim Watson-Munroe, said an angry young man was almost certainly responsible for both crimes. "We're probably dealing with the same offender, or offenders who are known to each other." Arnell was buried with little fanfare. Many people seemed to sympathise more with the killer than the deceased. Jeanne Lemane of the Australian Child Protection Alliance said the attitude was regrettable but understandable because few people believed the victims of paedophiles could get justice.

## Assad visit denounced

**H**UMAN RIGHTS organisations yesterday criticised President Jacques Chirac for inviting President Hafez al-Assad of Syria to Paris to discuss Middle East peace initiatives, writes Paul Webster in Paris.

The International Federation of Human Rights asked Mr Chirac to protest against the detention of 2,000 political prisoners in Syria, while Jewish organisations protested against Syria's refusal to extradite the Nazi war criminal, Alois Brunner, who organised the deportation of Jews from France.

## ANC officials shot dead

**S**OUTH AFRICAN police said yesterday that an MP of the ruling African National Congress and a senior ANC official had been shot dead, fuelling fears of a further upsurge in violence in the run-up to elections next year. A police spokesman said the MP, Bheki Mthembu, and the official, Skhondla Mthembu, were killed as they left a meeting late on Wednesday in Gungahlova, KwaZulu-Natal province. The deaths follow the killing of 25 people in Richmond, also in KwaZulu-Natal, blamed on tension between the ANC and Bantu Holomisa's United Democratic Movement. Reuters, Johannesburg.

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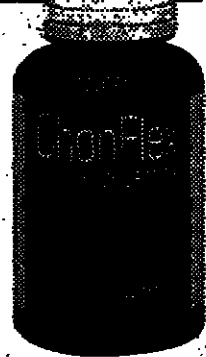
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# Analysis Classical music

## The halls are alive with the sound of...

As the Proms season begins **David Walker** asks just what the growing audience for classical music wants

**T**ONIGHT Andrew Davies will raise his baton and the BBC Symphony Orchestra will kick off another Proms season with Berlioz's *Damnation of Faust*. It's the first night and the Albert Hall will be full — Nick Kenyon, Radio Three's controller, is hoping to exceed last year's quarter of a million attendances. The audience listening at home varies. Radio Three getting 2.5 million listeners a week (1), but it's safe to say the Proms will once again form a significant part of that cultural cluster gathered around "classical music".

The problem is that word "classical". The Proms include gospel singing, Javanese gamelan music and Gershwin as well as Ligeti, multiple Mahler, Bach and Beethoven. "Do I want the largest audience here?" asks John Tusa rhetorically — he is director of the Barbican Centre and a staunch critic of "dumbing down" at the BBC. "Of course. But I also want the largest possible audience for the best possible artistic programme and sometimes we know that will only get a 60 per cent audience."

But his canonical confidence in identifying the "best possible" is no longer widely shared. The self-confident elite who made the Third Programme the self-described "envy of the world" has imploded. A diet of Honegger, Britten, Nielsen and Mahler (from the Third Programme schedule for October, 1947) is too rich for modern palates. Ours is a democratic age which prizes diversity (and non-comparability between musical forms) and harbours resentment at favouritism. Look at the fuss over the Royal Opera: many actively reject patterns of subsidy that benefit a small number, which is one way of defining the BBC's budget for Radio Three.

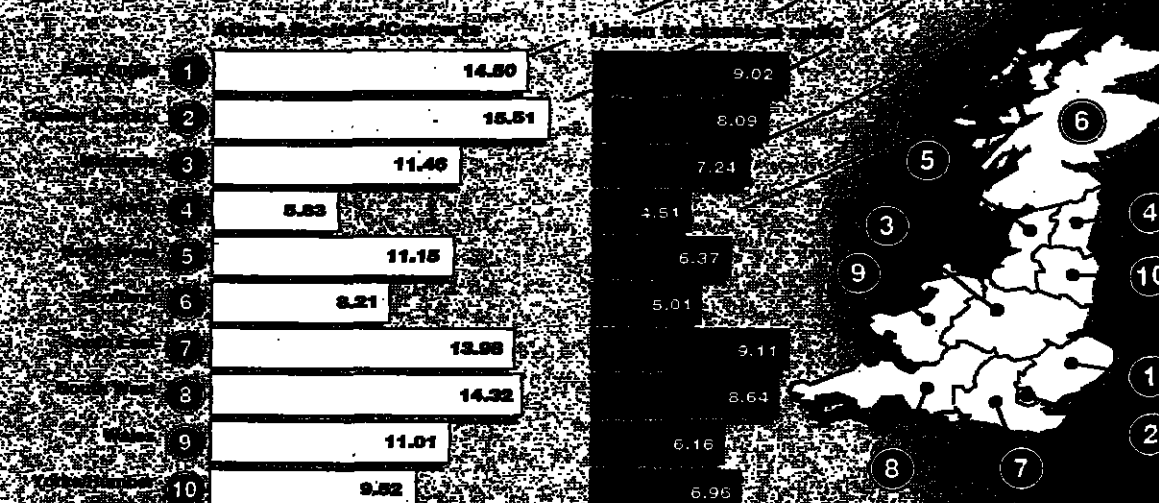
Meanwhile debate rages about cultural decline. No one really believes basic musical standards have slipped. There is no dissent about how you blow an E flat on a French

horn; there's little disagreement about the technical attainment, the breathing and the pitching of the Three Tenors. There's conflict, however, about what they sing, about sticking to the already known, the melodic and the easy. Dispute centres on repertoire and length and demand. Cultural policy makers and BBC planners have lost their bearings. They fear, with some reason, that challenging their audiences is a recipe for losing them. "Fifteen or 20 years ago there was an assumption that the audience that went to classical music concerts did so all the time, they knew what they were in for," Nick Kenyon says. "Now there isn't so much of a unitary classical music audience. In one way they are much more open-minded about what they are going to. In another they are much less secure and you cannot take certain things for granted." So presenters smooch, get away with mispronouncing foreign words, assume less knowledge on their listeners' part. They dumb down.

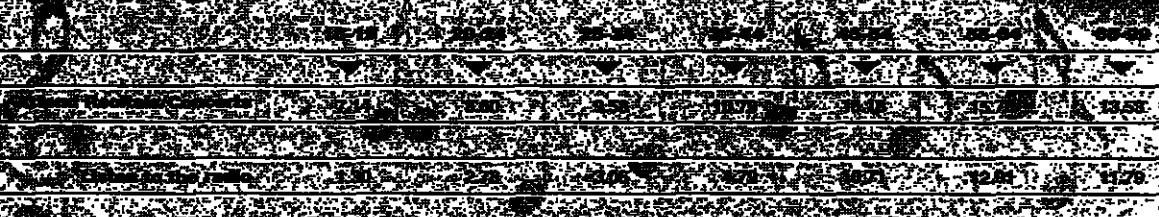
Or are they merely different from the starchy and snobby characters the BBC once employed? Because culture is so contested, measures of decline (or improvement) are scarce. To be edu-

## A classic tale

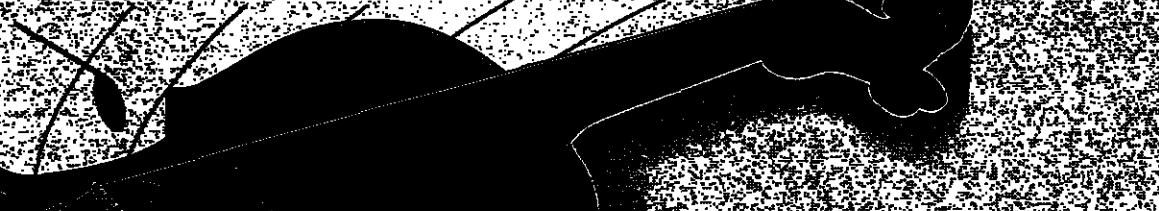
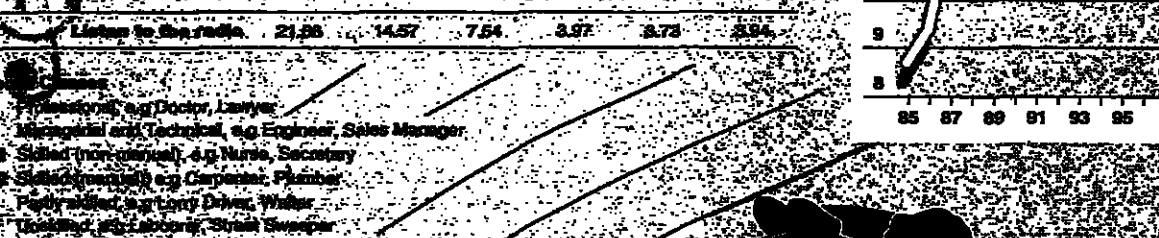
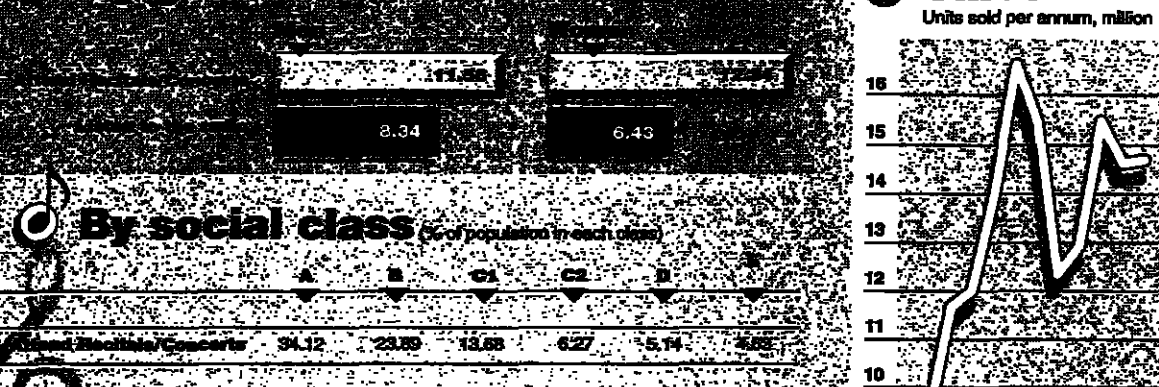
### By region



### By age



### By social class



**Ecstasy is finished**  
12

ated is not necessarily to be "cultured". So a doubling of the population with degrees and the ongoing expansion of higher education does not, in itself, tell us much about appetite for high culture. Yet all the pointers say the more education (and the more income) the higher the brow, at least as indicated by a taste for concerts, CD-buying and serious radio listening. For example, just over 40 per cent of Radio Three's audience is in social classes A and B; a much higher proportion of ABs buy classical music than DEs (2). Newspaper readership is sometimes taken as a proxy for cultural change. How, then, to interpret the loss of readers by the "red top" tabloids and increased total readership of quality papers? Aggregate book sales have been fairly flat in recent years; ought the fact they have not fallen reassure pessimists who fear literacy must decline in a Web-dominated age?

As for classical music, we seem to be in the midst of a boom, which if real could make anguished debates about the future of Radio Three rather precious. It suits Classic FM, the music station, to be bullish. If, it says, you take together all those who ever listen to it or Radio Three plus concert-goers, purchasers of classic music CDs, those who make their own music, those who read about classical music and those who watch on television, you get up to 15.4 million people or a third of the English population. But that may be to conflate groups which do not necessarily overlap. CD buyers — in 1996 sales of classical CDs were greater than ever before in volume — are not necessarily concert-goers or listeners to music radio. A cooler estimate of the classic audience is the Arts Council's which puts its figures at for 1995-96 the number of people who in a twelve-month period attended at least one classical music concert at 13 per cent of the population.

Let's — for a moment — not quibble about defining "classical" and stick with music industry convention. It's hard to trace figures back in time but we can form a composite picture of who does consume classical music (see graphic) and the implication must be that there are more such people around now than ever before. It's plausible that as society grows more affluent (Gordon Brown predicted average growth the other day of 2.5 per cent over the next few years) and more educated (viz David Blunkett's aspirations) then the classical audience ought to be growing. This implies a growing market for recorded music. Music industry gloom about long run sales trends ought to disperse. Trade data shows that there was a peak in sales of classic music cassettes and CDs (LPs are now virtually dead) in 1989-90 with some decline in the early nineties. Sales probably track the progress of the economy at large though Nigel Kennedy's smash-hit recording of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* in 1990 also helped.

You don't have to be a cultural pessimist in the mould of George Steiner to wonder whether volume conceals important changes in quality (though Steiner's anxieties about cultural decline are clouded by his piercing observation about how listening to, even playing great music does nothing for your civility as the Nazis showed). Last year's top-selling classical CD titles were, at number one,

Most Relaxing Classic Album Ever! (Various Artists) followed by Diana Princess of Wales 1961-1997 (Various Artists) then Adiemus II - Cantata Mundi (Adiemus) and so on through Lesley Garrett and the Medieval Babes (3). The "Shine" album was in the chart, too. It's here the fisticuffs break out. To some people the very phrase "Smooth Classics" (a popular Classic FM programme strand) is hateful, let alone violinists in hot pants and wet tee-shirts. To others, even a few minutes of lollipop (such as Eine Kleine Nachtmusik) is an extension of music experience for many people which broadens the culture.

It is hard to place changes in taste in an historical framework. The old category of "light music" (for example by British composer Eric Coates) has gone; in its place you get excerpts from Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake, which are unquestionably "classical". Classic FM is different from Radio Three in its style and playlist. But it does not always sound different.

Nick Kenyon recently announced he is leaving Radio Three, though he will remain promoter of the Proms. His has been an uncomfortable job and his successor will have it no easier. The hard place is giving the BBC the numbers it feels it needs to justify the licence fee; the rock is maintaining a schedule that challenges and surprises its necessarily small audience. Those are code words for music that may be "difficult", unfamiliar or downright obscure. Kenyon's own formula is "surprise... something they haven't heard before, which astonishes or delights" (4).

Classic FM claims a weekly reach of 5.2 million or over twice Radio Three's. This suggests the BBC could get the numbers if it wanted, if it were even less "surprising". The argument becomes one about quality and standards and the politics of state funding of non-universal services. Nick Kenyon is right in arguing there is less and less consensus about what is important, culturally. It is unwise to assume that audiences know as much about music as we thought. I don't think that's an intellectual insult. I am not talking to them any less as if they are intelligent, interested or engaged.

But why shouldn't that mean providing wall-to-wall Lesley Garrett and bite-sized Mozart? Even to pose the question is to show you have lost any sense of the essential virtue of certain music, says John Tusa. "If all you are doing — as it appears all too often the BBC is — is saying we know what the audience should be and we will now define a programme which will maximise that audience, you have abandoned the intrinsic value argument" (5).

Sources: (1) BBC weekly reach figures Jan-March 1998; (2) British Phonographic Institute, Market Information No 105, April 1998; (3) Chart Information Network; (4) Humphrey Carpenter, *The Envy of the World*, Weidenfeld, 1995; (5) Interviews with John Tusa and Nick Kenyon, Radio Four Analysis programme, transmitted 2/4/98.

Graphics Sources: BMRB, Target Group Index October 1996-September 1997; Chart Information Network; Classical trade deliveries. Graphics: Steve Villiers and Graphic News. Research: Jane Critchton and Matthew Keating. David Walker edits "Analysis".

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# Comment

## Diary

Matthew Norman

I AM disturbed to learn that my old friend Dr Julian Lewis is trapped in a time-war and is now the last person on earth to be fighting the cold war. On Wednesday, the silly chump launched an unguided missile against the Labour peeress Helen Kennedy, whose fitness to be chairman of the British Council he questioned because (among other reasons) a Communist Party branch once took an advert in the Morning Star to congratulate her on the birth of a child. The gallant Fatty "Nicholas" Soames wasn't having it. "It is not my place," said Fatty, "to apologise for the appalling speech of my honourable friend, the Member for New Forest East..." A call to Julian's constituency agent elicits the response that he will not comment since "the Guardian Diary has repeatedly reported me accurately and treated me fairly." Upset by this, we call back to seek a rapprochement, but find him out. "Dr Lewis is in the middle of a briefing from the CIA about Mr Brezhnev's health," we are told, "and cannot possibly be disturbed."

UNABLE to repress its inherent modesty, the Sun yesterday lauded its own political scoops, listing names in Gordon Brown's big speech it predicted in advance: the "pay freeze on teachers and nurses", for example, and "heating payout every winter for old folk". Sadly the pay issue remains undecided and Gordon's speech failed to promise permanent heating payouts. Less haste more speed perhaps lads.

LET'S hope that the leak handed to Channel 5 about the findings of the arms to Africa committee is equally inaccurate. On Sunday week, the station is screening Robin Cook's Terminal — a taut thriller, according to the press release, about a man putting his career in jeopardy at an institution whose "methods are not only questionable but also sinister".

WITH Mandy Mandelson blatantly bidding for Chris Smith's job we glance at his splendid tome the Blair Revolution to gauge his interest in culture, media and sport. And here it is, all of it. "There should be more emphasis in spotting and developing sporting talent (in state schools)". Most illuminating. Meanwhile, according to the journalist and master of the word, Richard Heller, putting Mandy in charge of the media is like putting King Herod on a child care committee. This seems harsh (will no one stick up for Herod?), and anyone with an alternative comparison is invited to submit it. A bottle of the usual rubbish to the wittiest three.

AT Wednesday's New Statesman party, guests were thrilled to see Dolly Draper sitting up to Gordon Brown, hands held over face in a coquettish parody of shame. "Don't talk to me, you can't talk to me," he teased. Gordon, a model of cool courtesy, asked how he was. Fine, said Dolly, switching smoothly to cooing, my Telegraph column starts tomorrow. (Indeed it did, and to this we shall doubtless return.) Gordon asked whether he's being paid £2,500 an hour. The celebrated figure, corrected Dolly, was £250 — and hadn't the Chancellor heard that inflation is slowing down? And then, having patronised the Chancellor, it was time for the coup de grace — the faux sincerity. "Listen," said Dolly, dragging a look of contrition across those elfin features. "I'm really sorry, you can't talk to me." Say what you will about Dolly, his chutzpah is wondrous to behold.

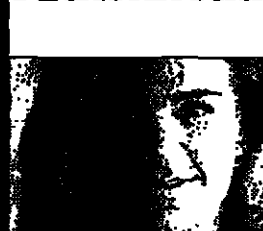
IN Miami, an important legal precedent may be imminent. Paul Shinkonski is suing Diamond Dolls, an "exotic dance" establishment in Clearwater Florida, over an incident at his stag night. Mr Shinkonski suffered whiplash injuries when an "entertainer" called Tawny Peaks slammed her breasts into his head during his stag night. "My wife understood completely," he tells the Miami Herald. "She has a good sense of humour."

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## Ecstasy is finished. But it wasn't law and order that did the job

Decca Aitkenhead



THERE are few things more boring than other people's drug anecdotes. They are like other people's dreams — fascinating to the individual involved, but opaque and largely tedious to everyone else. So it is with some reluctance that I offer the following tale, but I think it merits an account.

A young man who had reached his 30s without encountering narcotics recently decided he wanted to try Ecstasy. The Ecstasy veterans he consulted were doubtful. It would change his life, they warned. Once he'd tried it, he'd be charging around nightclubs every weekend like some teenage raver. He'd be tormented by all the Ecstasy clubbing years he'd missed. It's an epiphany experience, they cautioned. Was he ready for all that?

Undeterred, he took a pill. He waited for something to happen. After an hour or so, he was still waiting. So he took another, and then another. By then he had run out of Ecstasy, and could detect only a minor tingle in his left leg. He bought more, and at last, after the fourth pill, could be described as mildly chemically enhanced. After calculating the level of enhancement which 240 worth of Ecstasy would achieve, however, he drew his Ecstasy experiment to an early and disappointed close.

This year sees the 10th anniversary of the arrival in Britain of Ecstasy and House music. What began as a private piece of magic for those who knew which secret warehouse was staging the rave, soon transformed the entire anatomy of British nightlife. Youth culture became dance culture. DJs became household names. Everything, to quote a truly terrible House

track, really did start with an E.

Ten years on, publishers are churning out books to mark the anniversary. Titles like *Once In A Lifetime* and *Class of 88* chronicle the Ecstasy revolution, and magazines have printed special celebratory issues. The tone is at times wistful, scattered with lamentations that it's "not as good as it used to be", but the general consensus holds that the revolution stood its ground. The mainstream media is in agreement, repeatedly reporting that at least 1,000,000 people take Ecstasy every weekend, and that superclubs like the Ministry of Sound are the future of the leisure industry.

Last week a museum in Rotterdam opened an exhibition to commemorate 10 years of House. Different rooms feature club flyers, photos of clubbers, re-creations of nightclub interiors. It is a charming installation, and evokes the spirit of the decade — but critics have queried the sense in a museum memorialising a trend just 10 years old, and still going strong. What few have recognised is that a museum exhibition is entirely appropriate. Just when everyone is agreeing that Ecstasy is here to stay, club culture is, in fact, dying.

In cities like Manchester, the British birthplace of House, clubs are closing because people can no longer be bothered to go to them. They prefer to go to bars and drink bottled beer and jiggle about to a DJ whose name they neither know nor care. Ecstasy is a popular notion, and it's rubbish. The whole point about Ecstasy was that Sharon, Kevin, Henrietta, Swampy and Leroy could all take it, and consequently go along like a house on fire. Yet

with pulling each other. All the defining features of House clubs — sexual friendliness, non-violence, trust — are vanished, replaced by the tensions which typified pre-Ecstasy nightclubs.

To those who bypassed 10 years of popular culture, the state of British clubland possibly seems neither here nor there. For the millions who are engaged with it, however — and for the authorities attempting to control them — it merits examination.

For a few years, a generation genuinely believed it had discovered a new existence, one of infinite social possibility unlocked by a chemical tablet which led into a world free of prejudice. Otherwise-conventional people were happy to break the law to get there. In *Once In A Lifetime*, a clubber is quoted saying, "Before Ecstasy, it was like there I wasn't, then there I was," an Observer journalist wrote: "It's as if music is translating our lives, re-writing our genes."

YOU would search hard to find a clubber saying anything like that in 1988 — and even harder for one who will admit why. They usually blame the very thing Ecstasy was originally supposed to represent: universality. They say that if House culture is collapsing, it's because Sharon and Kevin and their dodgy mates heard about it and came clubbing, but don't know how to behave themselves. They are aggressive, don't dance, and ruin the vibe. This is a popular notion, and it's rubbish. The whole point about Ecstasy was that Sharon, Kevin, Henrietta, Swampy and Leroy could all take it, and consequently go along like a house on fire. Yet

the same people who, in 1988, were enthralled about Ecstasy because it "broke down barriers" are, 10 years later, saying the problem is that any old idiot thinks he can join in.

The House and Ecstasy scene is effectively finished, but the post-mortem is not. There is only one reason why it is dying, and it is because what people now describe as Ecstasy is nothing of the sort. Successive analyses of "Ecstasy" reveal that it is a hotch potch of glucose, caffeine and occasionally some chemicals which may, if you are lucky, make you feel vaguely altered, but inspires none of the emotions which created House culture. Enthusiasts may like to think House was more than a chemical construct. A visit to any club tonight would demonstrate that it wasn't.

Just now there are still enough older clubbers who remember real Ecstasy — and therefore act out the memory of its impact, despite having taken a tablet of expensive glucose — to sustain the illusion of dance culture.

The man who took four Ecstasy tablets accompanied by a veteran who, until he witnessed his friend's indifference and reassessed his own condition, thought the Ecstasy was great. But soon clubs will be full of people with no memory of real Ecstasy, and the game will be up.

A colossal amount of public money and energy has been spent in the war on Ecstasy. It had no effect whatsoever. The people destroying the market for Ecstasy are the dealers themselves who got greedy and knocked out cheap imitations instead. After all the costly attempts at control and crackdowns, what has finally killed Ecstasy is the unregulated free market.

## Riding the bulls

Bill Buford



ANNIE PROULX is responsible for why I write about the Canadian Rockies, where I've just watched what is modestly described as "the greatest outdoor show on earth" — the Calgary Stampede, the rodeo of rodeos. In my ignorance I didn't think that you went to Canada to watch a rodeo. In my ignorance, I couldn't imagine that rodeos were still an original feature of life anywhere: they seemed such an exaggerated, kitschy, preposterous thing. But rodeos have undergone a renaissance — on one part of this continent they are the most popular form of public entertainment — and 1,250,000 people attended the two-week-long Calgary Stampede.

You might know Annie Proulx, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Shipping News* and *The Accordion Player*, as E Annie Proulx, that is a legacy of her once being known as EA Proulx, then a young author writing for a hunting magazine which couldn't admit that a woman could write about hunting. Last autumn she began publishing a series of exotic Western stories which she describes as Grimm fairy tales set in Wyoming. The first was *Brokeback Mountain*, a deft, dense account of two young cowboys who, isolated, looking after a herd of cattle high on a mountain range, fall in love — a love which she describes as a "difference. Last May she completed another, *The Mud Below*, about a boy who discovers the do-or-die nerve rush of sitting atop an animal which would like to kill him, and becomes a bull rider. Proulx writes about it as both a "hook" and an unbearably personal "feeling of power" — a "frightful, greedy, physical hunger". In fact she's writing about the unique exhilaration of a moment lived at its fullest: an experience so demanding, or dangerous, that it is not mediated by self-consciousness or reflection or thought. It's the strange death-wish stuff that boys tend to crave. The buzz of battle.

I WROTE about it glancingly in a book about crowd violence, and Annie Proulx and I began an exchange. How curious that this tough-talking salty genius of sentences should become a student of boy behaviour. And all that, in an indirect way, is how I ended up in the grandstand of the Calgary Stampede, along with 30,000 others, almost entirely clad in cowboy boots and hats.

I was not, I concede, wearing cowboy boots; I was wearing my English brogues and a linen jacket and I stood out like a mutant geek. Where did these people come from? Later, in the evening, I watched them, as I passed from bar to bar, dancing the Texas two-step to loud sentimental whiny music all about cheating hearts. In the parking lots, I saw cars from Texas, Oklahoma, Wyoming, and Montana. These people, I was coming to understand, were neither American nor Canadian, but residents of another state, a third province, this great flap of flat land, the prairies, the historic badlands which run along the edge of the Rockies all the way up into the Arctic.

There are six major events in a rodeo. And overall, the participants showed a remarkable proficiency: the calf got roped, the steer got wrestled, the cowboy stayed atop the bucking bronco. The exception was bull-riding. Bull riding was different in just about every respect. For a start, the riders were kids — 18, 19. The oldest was 21. And utterly fearless. Or else united by a death wish. They had names like Cliff or Troy or Ty. There was Rusty and Red and Cliff.

The first bull never got out of the pen: it threw its rider five feet in the air the moment the gate opened. The second rider lasted two seconds. The clown trying to distract the animal, while the rider scouted for the perimeter fence, was gored in the knee. The third rider broke his collar bone when he landed on his head. It wasn't until the ninth bull that someone succeeded in staying on for the regulation eight count, waving his cowboy hat as 30,000 people all whooped.

I once lived in the far outer fringes of Los Angeles, an area of animal trails and sage brush and tumble weeds. I had a job, my first job, age 14, at the Double Star Rodeo Ranch, cleaning 26 stalls, shovelling out sodden straw, heavy with horse urine and steaming green droppings, and wheeling it all to a monumental mountain of shit, into which I routinely sank up to my waist. The smell clinging to my clothes was uniquely powerful, a sticky smell, a pungent, pervasive wave of molecules, like a cloud of ammonia, which managed to adhere to the fine fibre hair in your nose and not be shaken loose. I'm convinced that if I concentrated I can still detect that smell, enduring testimony of a particular tenacious molecule that just won't let go. There is a chain of heroes in the business of a rodeo. The guy who cleans out the stalls and spends his morning sinking deep into a mountain of shit is not particularly high up on it. And I'm now rather happy that I never climbed any higher.

They were dancing to loud whiny music all about cheating hearts

Speaking as a chief constable, I am prepared to abandon the police's monopoly of street patrols

## Off-beat solution

Ian Blair

WE STAND at a turning-point in the history of policing in Britain. The past 50 years have seen an accelerating loss of our share of the security market — the loss of guarding of cash in transit, the monopoly of control of sports events, prisoner escorts, and above all, the subtle redefinition of what was once public space — the High Streets — into private space in the form of shopping centres, patrolled by private security.

This tide will continue. Within 10 years it is possible that a substantial proportion of the police function may be absorbed by other local authorities and an unregulated private security sector.

Alternatively, the police service can put itself forward as the central point both of co-operation to strengthen communities, and of patrol ser-

vices carried out by a mixture of police, volunteer, local authority and private sources. It is not abandoning a monopoly of patrol. It is admitting that we haven't had one for years. The hobby on patrol, alone, has been seen as, somehow, the point of the service. Yet you and I know the very small number of police officers who are actually patrolling. Chief officers and police authorities are simply choosing not to spend particularly heavily on patrolling officers.

In Britain, private and local authority patrols are well-known at Wandsworth, Sedgefield, Stockport and Newport. Gwent. In the Netherlands, every town is now patrolled by uniformed city guards — managed by the police.

Numerous business improvement districts are appearing across the US, set up by communities to make themselves more attractive to incoming investment. Common to almost all of them is

the provision of additional patrols. Sometimes they look like police officers. Sometimes they don't. Sometimes they look like Butlin's red-coats. This is patrol where there is little crime or disorder; patrol to be visible; patrol which will not be called away to something else; patrol which is local and entirely

They look like police officers, or sometimes like Butlin's red-coats

customer-oriented. Modern citizens feel uncertain, their futures unsafe. They are seeking reassurance.

Staff of the Newport estate ranger service are intended to deal with "excessive noise, threatening behaviour, causing a nuisance, joy-riding,

vandalism, fighting, bonfires, unruly children, trespassing, abandoned or unsightly vehicles, improper parking, denying access, uncontrolled pets, dumping rubbish, running businesses from council property, unsightly front gardens, disputes with neighbours".

Community security should not, however, merely be a matter of consumer choice. I would want local constables to co-ordinate all that activity. We already train and accredit door supervision — "bouncers" — who carry out a much more confrontational task. Why shouldn't we do the same with private security and local authority patrols?

How would this look in a small town such as Woking? The private security guards in the local shops and shopping centres have uniforms marked "Surrey police compliant", showing their standards of training and recruitment are acceptable. Two local authority patrols in

bright red uniforms similarly marked, move around the High Street, drawn from the welfare-to-work programme. They have radios connected to a police officer, who may be liaising with education and social security, discussing an anti-truancy campaign. Their

cars, too, are marked "Surrey police compliant", as is the van from a local security company, passing by an route to check commercial premises.

Do you think the public would feel safer with that approach than with the sight of one or two patrolling officers, the occasional special constable and a traffic warden, which is the reality of viable daily policing in Woking?

But why should the police be the regulators? Because police services are too big to be dominated by the factional interests of small communities — and because, while admitting many notable lapses, some of which are currently under scrutiny, the police service has a long history of being more tolerant than many local communities, whether over paedophiles, travellers, tramps, or the residents of ball hostels.

This is a middle course between defending an indefensible monopoly over patrol, and the creeping unregulated privatisation of security in public places. This is the third way for the police service.

Ian Blair is chief constable of Surrey. This is an extract from his speech yesterday to the Association of Chief Police Officers





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## The hole in Europe

It needs a constitution

PADDY ASHDOWN deserves our applause. Yesterday he managed to pull off what many observers had believed was impossible: he made a fresh contribution to the debate on Europe. In a lunchtime speech to the Centre for European Reform, he cut through the usual stereotypes of Euro-scepticism and the equally tired, pro-European metaphors about trains leaving stations. Instead he came up with a bright idea — it was time to draw up a written constitution for Europe.

On his way to reaching that conclusion, the Liberal Democrat leader made some sound observations. He noted that the European Union will hardly inspire most Britons so long as our participation in it is argued in the language of "grudging acceptance." Pro-Europeans, he said, "must put the positive case more loudly and more often." He's right. Too much of the UK's European debate has historically gone by default, with enthusiasts arguing their case as a matter of inevitability — with closer union presented as an unavoidable fate rather than an outcome to be pursued. In this context, Mr Ashdown's attack on Labour for being mealy-mouthed on the single currency — "the Government should come off the fence" — will strike a chord, and not only with pro-Europeans. Both sides in this most crucial debate should encourage the "declaratory positions" Mr Ashdown hankers after: the alternative is for Britain to make the decision on the euro without a full-blooded debate, merely declaring our verdict on a

fait accompli, invited to take it or leave it. But the Lib-Dem leader's most urgent point was his call for a written constitution. He has realised that people across Europe are in the dark about an institution increasingly responsible for key decisions affecting their lives. The European Union speaks a language few understand, "that inscrutable, acronym-laden bureaucracy-speak which dominates so much communication in the EU." Mr Ashdown excoriates the EU for its invisibility, citing the Council of Ministers' habit of meeting in secret behind closed doors.

Mr Ashdown's solutions are, among other things, an assault on "the culture of secrecy," with a demand for a Freedom of Information Charter for all EU bodies as well as additional teeth for the European Parliament, enabling it to hold the over-mighty Commission and Council to account. But, beyond the specific steps proposed, it is Mr Ashdown's underlying logic which is so appealing. In essence, he is reminding the EU that it is meant to be the servant of the people, not the other way around. He wants to "formulate a constitution for Europe from the bottom up," a radical departure for a body which has long been run from the top down, as the exclusive preserve of the great European elites.

The advantages are clear. A written, accessible constitution — contained in a document clear enough to be understood by everybody and short enough to fit into your pocket — would immediately strip away the mystique of the EU. Most people cannot comb through the sub-clauses of the Treaty of Rome; they deserve to have the rules of this new, semi-government spelled out, in black and white. In an instant, the EU would seem less faceless and out of reach, and more like a human-made creation that can be moulded and changed. As Mark Leon-

ard's paper for Demos last month showed, most people feel very much part of Europe but not of the EU: a written constitution would help break down that alienation.

All those arguments are sound. So sound, in fact, that they apply just as well to another political entity which often seems baffling and obscure to the people it is meant to serve: the British state. We need a written constitution for Europe — and for Britain, too.

## Dream come true

But more NHS reform is needed

ONLY the mean-minded could begrudge Frank Dobson his moment of triumph. For 14 months he has stoically — too stoically for our taste — defended the indefensible: the Government's squeeze on the NHS. But now comes his reward: three consecutive years of 4.7 per cent real growth. No wonder he was glowing on the front bench yesterday. Who wouldn't have, given the reception the spending review received from health pressure groups? It was not a programmed Labour brown-noser but the independent NHS Confederation, representing health authorities and hospitals, which described the package as "beyond our wildest dreams". It is not the largest increase — that came in the first three years of this decade when the Tories pumped in 5.5 per cent annually in a desperate bid to ensure their internal market did not collapse — but it is a large investment which brings real hope to the NHS.

Yesterday we were supposed to get the details of how this extra £18 billion in cash — or £5.4 billion in real terms — was going to be spent. Alas, Dobbo let us down. There was a speech but no papers, no documents,

no press conference. We learned there would be 7,000 more doctors and 15,000 more nurses in the next three years but were given no details of how this fitted in with the increases already planned. We learned there would be a £5 billion modernisation fund designed to transform the NHS into a service which both the staff and public wanted to see: fast and convenient, responsive to patients, with uniform high standards. Excellent, but again there was nothing beyond the generalities. The specifics were restricted to a pledge to improve or rebuild 1,000 GP surgeries over the next three years.

Labour's instincts are right. Modernisation is needed. So is a more responsive NHS but modernisation runs the risk of over-concentrating on expensive high tech tricks. Much more basic reforms are needed in an NHS which has been deprived of urgently needed capital for so long. Mental health services, in a state of collapse in some inner cities, got a mention but there were no details of how much they will get. Publicly funded capital projects will rise to £2 billion but 28 out of 24 new hospitals are being built with private finance. This is a real hostage to fortune with contractors given forward guarantees when no-one knows what shape hospital provision will take in 2020. Dobbo needs to be more sceptical of private finance and more Frank with the details.

## Man and myth

It's a day to share with the world

THERE WILL hardly be anyone in the world who won't be wanting to shower happiness tomorrow on the world's most celebrated octogenarian — who is also, quite possibly, the world's most famous

man. It has been denied that his 80th birthday tomorrow will also be his wedding day, but whether it is or not, this year ushers in a new era in his extraordinary life.

The man who started South Africa's first black legal firm in 1952, who made an impassioned plea for equal opportunities during the Rivonia trial, who held his hand out to his captors during his long imprisonment and turned the other cheek to his enemies and who won the Nobel peace prize in 1950, has always been a ground-breaker. Marriage at 60 would, of course, be in that tradition. But then so is giving up office at the end of his term, thus keeping a promise (unlike many other leaders) made on his election almost five years ago.

As his autobiography reminds us, he was always and instinctively looking for the good in people — including his persecutors. It is sad that the government from which he will shortly retire has been less successful than over-optimistic pundits had hoped in transforming South Africa's deep-rooted social and economic problems. Crime is still disturbingly rife and the recent collapse of the rand and the associated lack of inward investment are a cold reminder that the world's gratitude to one of the century's most remarkable figures stops abruptly at the bottom line.

But these unhappy interventions of the real world will be forgotten this weekend. It is time that he was allowed to focus on his family and his pet project, the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund, without carrying the weight of expectations on his shoulders any longer.

Wellwishers around the globe will wish him a happy birthday. They will also hope that for the country, as well as for the man, life is really beginning again. Both he and South Africa richly deserve it.

## Letters to the Editor

### Figures of fun and profit

SURELY it is time for a curb on the writers of completely meaningless comparative figures? We are told (July 15) that the Crown Estate owns "about 84,000 hectares — roughly the size of 163,000 football pitches". On the same page, we are told that "water companies are 'still losing' 3,980 million litres a day — enough to fill about a billion Olympic-sized swimming pools a day". What is the point of either of these comparisons? It is not possible to visualise 163,000 football pitches any more than it is 84,000 hectares of agricultural land. It's jolly irritating. Please stop it. Andrew Wylie, London.

I WAS distressed to learn (A very important coup, July 16) that Guernsey has gone to the expense of employing Bell Pottinger to defend them against the slings and arrows of outrageous Mitchell and to tutor their deputies in the arts of lobbying, spinning and disingenuous letter-writing. If Jersey's experience is anything to go by, this kind of consultancy doesn't come cheap. The lobbying firm of Shandwick were able to charge Jersey nearly half a million pounds to promote images, write letters and win friends and influence people. All this was done to help the local elite protect its vested interest in providing services to the movers of money, both funny and serious. And the people of Jersey were asked to pay for it. Austin Mitchell MP, House of Commons.

THE nationalistic enthusiasm with which certain newspapers have treated the news that Viagra was fathered by a Briton forces me to ask an important question. Is this the ultimate case of one-upmanship? Richie Garnett, Twickenham.

## Couldn't care less

THERE has been much written in the wake of Daniel Joseph's trial about Care in the Community (System failure, July 14). There has also been comment about Carla Thompson, the woman he killed, mostly by people who didn't know her. As her daughter-in-law, I'd like to comment further.

Care in the Community falls where it aims to support. People are released into a community, which is ill-prepared to cope. Carla tried to cope, with those whom other people had given up on, or those who were neglected, even those who had given up on themselves. She provided shelter and kindness. Carla Thompson was not a "casualty", but a Christian who lived by her beliefs.

Carla's fate was not the de-bauched den of a deluded woman, but was her home, where people intermittently stayed. She looked after her friends and her dogs, enjoyed playing the guitar, had a drink very occasionally, tried not to smoke too much, read the Bible, went shopping, walked in the park, visited her grandchildren and was loved by those who knew her.

Whatever Carla's involvement in the series of events

which led up to her death earlier this year, it is avoiding the issue to see her as in any way culpable.

The mistakes made were in the profound mismanagement of Daniel's care, long before and during the time he knew Carla. If Carla is to be blamed for anything, it can only be for wanting to find the good in people and being too trusting.

It is a cruel irony that the manifestations of his psychosis, his obsession with sport and fame, were to her expressions of his talent and ambition to live with his disabilities. Sarah Doherty, London.

THE claim that homicide should come as "hardly a surprise" when the killer has been diagnosed as psychotic suggests an irrevocable link between violent deaths and psychosis. Inferences of this sort do enormous disservice to individuals who have experienced psychotic illness and their families.

An unwillingness to engage with mental health services and accept treatment is frequently located in the stigma conveyed by the label of mental illness.

The article communicates

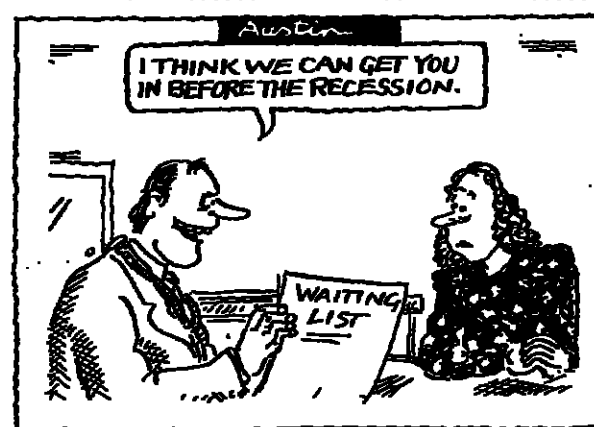
an image of the mental health service user as violent and dangerous. This image frightens potential users of services as much as it does the general public. It appears that those in direct contact with Daniel knew that he was not violent. While Sane appears pre-occupied by breakdowns in communication between agencies, we suggest that it is equally important to examine the quality of communication between professionals and service users.

Nicky Stanley and Jill Manthorpe, University of Hull.

A READER might well conclude that 80 murders of the Daniel Joseph variety occur every year, and that the numbers are growing. In fact they have remained at 50 since 1978, while the annual homicide rate has gone up from 300 to 450.

Of the 50 psychotic homicides each year, only four are of strangers. The remaining 46 are family tragedies. Many of these are carried out by people who have never been, or are not currently, known to psychiatric services.

Dr J L T Brierley, Hereford.



## Prescott's load of parking trouble

IS John Prescott seriously considering banning deliveries during the day? This will merely alter the already arduous parking laws and admit a failure to properly address congestion.

Dispatch riders have been denied the opportunity of earning a living because bikes have never had loading/unloading rights. Politicians have failed to legislate effectively. It is this laissez faire attitude and not the habits of drivers that has caused congestion.

As a full-time dispatch rider I fail to see why my bike should be banned from park-

ing whilst lorries get away with it.

There must be a case for taxation of large vehicles instead of treating everyone the same. Bikes have never contributed to congestion, but have for years put up with misapplied parking laws that cost many and benefit none.

I find myself frequently barked off the road I live in, which is single file, and this in a borough where 58 per cent do not have access to private transport. When are their and my interests going to be represented?

Michael Nandris, London.

## From Russia to Indonesia: moral hazards and the IMF

IN discussing the recent IMF emergency loan to Russia, James Meek notes that "moral hazard" is "... a euphemism for loan-sharking to a desperately poor country" (Yeltsin wins \$7bn IMF aid to shore up the rouble, July 14). However, this misrepresents the meaning of the term "moral hazard" as used by economists. The concept does not refer to an ethical lapse on the part of lenders, rather, it is a type of externality which results when borrowers, or more commonly, insured parties, engage in risky activities because they are protected from the consequences of such behaviour.

The Russian government has dangerously low levels of tax collection and is over-reliant on energy export revenue. In providing a bail-out from this predicament, the IMF inadvertently encourages such "morally hazardous" behaviour from Russia in the future.

David J Daly, London School of Economics.

THE \$90 billion foreign debt owed by the Indonesian corporate sector has not been nationalised (Poverty strikes when Cyclops is sovereign, July 13). The government has only agreed to guarantee the exchange rate at which the debt will be paid back. Moreover, the tax imposed on Chile on short-term capital is not particularly burdensome: the deposit required is now only 10 per cent.

Nor is it entirely correct to state that national measures to regulate capital flows will be outlawed by the IMF. In recent months, the IMF has substantially changed its views on financial liberalisation. It has acknowledged that the opening of capital accounts should be carried out cautiously and that certain restrictions on financial flows may well be necessary to address macro-economic and balance of payment problems.

Richard Tanner, Oxford.

## The sad tale of the San people

YOUR report on the copy-right deal between San artist, Cg'ose and Britart, was BA image built on the price of seven cows, July 11) was right to jump on what you perceived to be abuse of indigenous people. But Kuru — an indigenous people's grassroots organisation — was also discredited.

Kuru is an attempt by the San people to address poverty and transition. For 15 years, the San board have searched for their own answers through a variety of projects. The art

project is one of them. A San artist such as Cg'ose faces a bewildering acculturation process.

The loss of hunting and gathering resources resulted in a sedentary life. Families now have to live with hundreds, where there used to be dozens, often lacking the social mechanisms to deal with this. The artist also faces incessant demands from an ever-hungry family. Cg'ose has to deal with the inequalities and confusion that result from a dog-eat-dog

mentality that cash has brought in a society where a sharing ethos is still the norm. The tragedy of Cg'ose's story is not that he was a poor artist, but that the trap of poverty was impossible to break out of, in spite of an income higher than that of many professionals.

Rein Delcker, Fongbe Co-ordinator, Kuru Development Trust, Ghanzi, Botswana.

Please include a full postal address, even on e-mailed letters. We may edit letters: shorter ones are more likely to appear. The Country Diary is on Page 14.

## The truth about Jan Kavan

YOUR article (Britain denies quelling Czech cabinet source, July 15) on the possible appointment of Jan Kavan as foreign minister in the new Czech government was inaccurate in one respect.

The original finding against Kavan was made by the Broadcasting Complaints Commission was overturned on the grounds that Mr Kavan had knowingly given false information on affidavit, thus committing perjury. As you point out, Mr Kavan claimed to have done so to protect

underground contacts. However, the TV Eye programme correctly stated that the van being driven into Prague contained names and addresses, the very fact denied by Kavan in his BCC complaint, and sworn affidavit of August 19, 1992. The BCC's reversal of their original finding remains unprecedented, and was made possible by Kavan's admission of giving false evidence on affidavit.

Peter Smith, (Legal adviser, Thames Television, 1982-1993).

## Bye Tina, by golly!

### Bel Littlejohn

WEPT. Yes, I don't mind admitting it: I wept and wept and wept. And then — yep — I wept some more. And I was not alone. The corridors were awash with tears that day. I have it on good authority that some had to hire a small inflatable dinghy just to get to the coffee machine.

The occasion? Last week's

announcement by the legendary Tina Brown that she had decided to leave her job as the legendary editor of the legendary New Yorker, the world's greatest English language magazine for literature and multiple-homicide.

I had worked for Tina on the magazine as Associate Editor (Firearms) for the past three years. She used to lead the kind of day that is exhausting just to think about. She'd be woken at 4am by two award-winning trainers, then she'd leap into her jump-suit and onto the rowing-machine and proceed to edit the early editions, with her toes while the rest of her body roared for exactly 17 miles without a stop. OK, the odd comma might have been misplaced as a result, but, betcha-by-golly-wow (one of Tina's favourite New York expressions) could that broad edit a magazine while out rowing! At 7am,

she'd be attending her first working breakfast of the day, probably to kick ass with Henry Kissinger, who she employed on a part-time basis as a junior circulation manager. At 7.25am, she'd be helicoptering down to Washington, for her first celebrity breakfast of the day, hopefully with a serial killer of her choice, on day release from a neighbouring penitentiary.

The rest of the morning would be spent faxing abusive letters to senior writers and politicians. "Why the fucking fuck should I fuck with this fucking fuck fuck?" — the legendary fax she wrote to Saul Bellow after failing to enjoy one of his wordy short stories — is to be included in the new Oxford Dictionary of Literary Quotations.

Then she would cram in five separate luncheons in three separate cities with up to 15 VIP companions. But

you can bet your bottom dollar the lady never lost sight of literature. Between 2.17pm and 2.43pm every day of the working week (excluding Tuesdays and Thursdays, which she kept free for compiling invitation-lists), she would take the phone off the hook and speed read a major new novel. To prove she had been there, done that, she would write her legendary editorial comments in the margins every 100 pages.

"Fucking fuck — what fucking fuck is this fuck? — Fucking fuck a fucking life!" she scribbled on the last effort by bearded has-been Alexander Solzhenitsyn.

The rest of her day would be spent in a whirlwind of business forums, international conferences, fashion shows, summit meetings and high security prison visits, always on the look-out for new talent. But she'd always make

a point of keeping in touch with the great classics by employing anything up to 10 researchers to work their way through the works of Dickens, Hardy, James and Conrad on her behalf, with annotations written in a style she could absorb. "Fuck the fucky Portrait of a Fucking Lady — it fucking fucks" is written in the margin of page 845 of Henry James's great classic.

Why did she leave? She said that witnessing her mother's death had convinced her she wanted to run her own show, so when she was invited to take on the specially-created role of Catering Manager (Boiled Sweets and Light Refreshments) at the Disney Corporation it was an offer she couldn't refuse. And her achievement? To my mind it

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## Judge forces GM strike talks



GENERAL Motors and the United Auto Workers union have renewed their attempt to settle the six-week strike that has brought most of the carmaker's North American production to a halt, writes Nicholas Barnister. As strikers demonstrated outside the Flint Metal Cen-

tre in Michigan (above), the two organisations were criticised by a district court judge for failing to go to arbitration to settle the dispute centred on two GM plants in Flint. GM has been forced to close all but three of its plants in the region and lay off 166,000 workers,

resulting in an \$1 per cent slump in second quarter profits. Judge Paul Gadola, who described the dispute as a calamity for the community, said that the two sides should go to arbitration to hear the company's claim that the action was illegal since it

breached a previous no-strike agreement between GM and the UAW. The agreement allows strikes over health, safety and production standards. But GM claims the union is striking over broader issues such as investments, product allocations and jobs.

The judge technically denied a GM motion asking for immediate arbitration, saying it was not clear that it was warranted. But he told lawyers for GM and the UAW that they must meet independent umpire Thomas Roberts and both sides agreed.

The UAW warned that the dispute was unlikely to be settled through arbitration. The only way GM would resolve the issue, a spokesman said, was through collective bargaining with the union, its local committee, and its members.

PHOTOGRAPH: CARLOS OSORIO

## Pension shame lifted from 12

Rupert Jones

TWELVE of the pensions mis-selling scandals' worst offenders, including Prudential, were taken off the Government's list of shame yesterday after meeting deadlines for compensating victims. But three firms of independent financial advisers face the prospect of six-figure fines after failing to hit targets set last year. Two of the three — Financial Options and M&E Network — have already been penalised heavily. Treasury minister Helen Liddell said progress had been made in rectifying the mis-selling, but the firms removed from the list must not become complacent. They should focus on the second phase of the review, dealing with less pressing cases, which includes many people in their twenties, thirties and forties.

Royal & Sun Alliance and United Assurance.

Most had been ordered to clear up 100 per cent of their urgent cases by June 30. Financial Options, M&E Network and IFA Network appeared not to have met the June 30 deadline, the Personal Investment Authority said. It was "making inquiries of these firms" and indicated that disciplinary action was inevitable if this proved to be correct. Such action would almost certainly take the form of a fine.

The three firms were among 30 summoned to Mrs Liddell's office earlier this month and criticised for their lack of progress. Manchester-based Financial Options, Britain's third-largest IFA network, was fined a total of £400,000 last month in connection with mis-selling, while M&E Network was given a £100,000 penalty in August 1997.

The latest progress figures show that on average firms have resolved 77 per cent of their cases, but three — Financial Options, DBS Management and Burns Anderson — have sorted out less than 50 per cent.

"It is striking that these are all firms of independent financial advisers, whose performance is significantly poorer than the average," Mrs Liddell said. "This slow progress must be addressed by the firms concerned, and urgently."

Referring to the companies which had met the deadline, she said: "This does not mean their work is over. The regulators will shortly be announcing the way forward, and I hope all firms will respond constructively."

Prudential said it welcomed the announcement "as recognition of all the hard work we put into the priority-one case-load", adding: "We recognise the fact that we still have phase two ahead of us."

The 29 firms still on the list include household names such as NatWest, Standard Life and Legal & General.

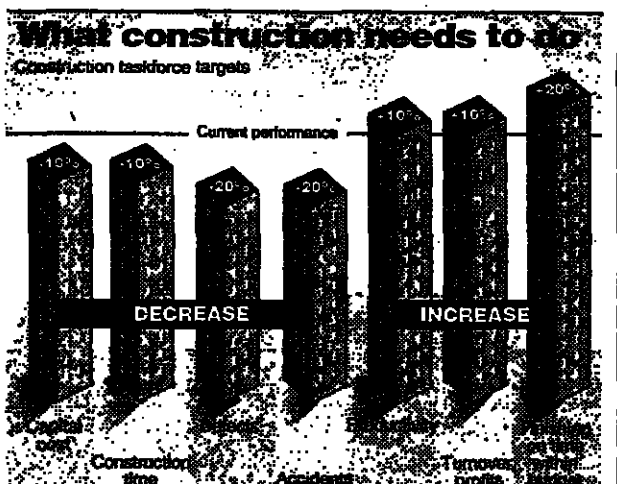
## Building industry fails City's value test

David Gow  
Industrial Editor

BRITAIN'S £58 billion construction industry is shunned by the City because it produces poor profits, fails to invest, and treats its employees as a commodity to be hired and fired and given dirty, unsafe conditions to work in, a government task force said yesterday.

In a devastating critique of an industry which contributes a tenth of Britain's annual output, the task force proposed tough targets for tens of thousands of firms to cut costs, defects and overruns, raise productivity and start treating its workers as a valuable asset.

Endorsing the report's targets, John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, who set up the task force, said he would be the industry's "most demanding client" in expecting vastly improved quality and value for money in the roads, hospitals and schools to be built under the Govern-



ment's new capital spending plans. Sir John Egan, BAA chief executive, who heads the task force, called for a cultural revolution in construction. He said the industry rated so poorly in the City that the market capitalisation of the entire quoted sector was £12 billion — only 75 per cent

of the value of Marks & Spencer.

As one of the pillars of the domestic economy, however, it was likely to produce £58 billion this year and employ 1.4 million workers. Yet its "flexible and willing" workforce was assigned by the bulk of the 163,000 construction firms to chaotic

sites which were covered with rubbish and "deluged by unwanted inventory", meaning unwanted materials lying around.

"We found that 90 per cent of injuries take place when people are assigned tasks for which they have never been trained. We have got to learn from the car and steel industries, where they delegate responsibility to the people who are often risking life and limb to carry out projects." Construction's health and safety record is the second worst of any industry.

The task force, comprising senior executives, an academic and a retired trade unionist, found that up to 30 per cent of construction is work being re-done, labour is used at only 40-60 per cent of potential efficiency, accidents account for up to 6 per cent of total costs and at least 10 per cent of materials are wasted.

Tesco, Sir John pointed out, had reduced the capital cost of its stores by 40 per cent in five years and planned a further 20 per cent cut over two years. Its sites, he noted, con-

tained canteens, changing rooms and showers, and its workforce was skilled and well trained.

Mr Prescott, embracing the call for an annual 10 per cent improvement in productivity and other targets, said the Government would apply the radical approach recommended by the task force.

"This week's comprehensive spending review urged a doubling of capital investment as a proportion of GDP."

"I want more efficient means used in the construction of schools, hospitals and roads, with increased spending linked to greater modernisation. We want better quality, more value for money."

## IMF 'puts UK jobs at risk'

Mark Miller in The Hague

A RUINOUS price war caused by the Asian crisis is threatening jobs in the UK. The head of Siemens yesterday criticised the role of the International Monetary Fund for indirectly helping Asian firms to sustain "suicidal prices" in the global semiconductor market.

The German group, whose semi-conductor plant on North Tyneside employs 1,100 people, predicts that its chip-making business will lose more than DM1 billion (£344 mil-

lion) this year and blames what president and chief executive Heinrich von Pierer described as the "suicidal pricing strategy" of Asian competitors. "The International Monetary Fund's financial aid to Asia, especially to Korea, indirectly helps these competitors maintain these policies," he claimed.

Mr Von Pierer said he was not criticising the measures taken by the IMF in general but "banks are being funded and... these banks then fund the major corporations".

With capital accounting for up to 80 per cent of the costs of chip manufacture

"we do not have the normal terms of competition there", Mr Von Pierer said.

The slump of up to 80 per cent in prices for memory chips means Siemens will have to adjust its semi-conductor capacity which is concentrated on five plants: in Tyneside, Taiwan, Germany, the US and France.

Mr Von Pierer refused to be taken in by what action would be taken. His comments are bound to undermine concerns that the efforts of Asian economies hit by last year's financial crisis to export their way out of trouble will increase the prospect of global trade tensions.

## News in brief

## Society result may be early

Nationwide may announce "as a courtesy to candidates" the result of crucial elections to the board the day before next Thursday's annual general meeting to decide the building society's future.

Whether Michael Hearn and Andrew Muir, who back conversion to a bank, win seats will not influence the vote on de-mutualisation. Saturday is the final day for voting at branches and postal votes must be returned by 11am Tuesday.

Record share placing Cable & Wireless raised nearly \$1.5 billion (£902 million) in London's biggest share placing to buy the Internet interests of US telecoms company MCI. The deal was sealed after MCI and WorldCom's \$37 billion merger finally won US justice department approval.

Fraud plague Fraudsters are plaguing individual investors thanks to rising earnings and disposable income during the last two years, the Serious Fraud Office said yesterday.

Cases of fraud on investors totalled 41 in 1997/98 compared with 29 in 1996/97.

MacKenzie close A consortium led by former Sun editor Kelvin MacKenzie was close to taking control of speech-based Talk Radio, after signing a heads of agreement with main shareholder CLT-Ufa of Luxembourg, thought to value its 63.2 per cent stake at about £25 million.

## British Bio loses £50m

JNI Treasurer

BRITISH Biotech, the drugs development company, reported losses yesterday of almost £50 million, £16 million more than last year.

The company, once the leading firm in Britain's burgeoning biotech sector which employs 10,000 people, has never made a profit in its 10-

year history. Like most biotech companies, it has yet to bring a product to market and its profit potential is dependent on its drugs pipeline.

Its problems worsened this year after it fired Andrew Millar, who ran many of the company's drug trials, when he told shareholders of his doubts about British Bio's main products. He has said that British Bio's pancreatic drug, Zacutax, is probably

useless and that marimastat, a cancer treatment, has only a 40 per cent chance of success.

Dr Millar, who broke down in tears before a powerful select committee of MPs two weeks ago, believes British Bio has wasted time and millions of pounds on the firm's two key projects.

But John Raisman, the chairman of British Biotech, insisted yesterday that its drugs had commercial potential, and added: "The company has maintained its focus on... development projects with commercial potential."

He said it still had a sound base from which to build shareholder value. Its shares are now worth 33p from levels above £3.

## TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

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Austria 0.97	Greece 0.7471	Malta 0.62	South Africa 8.73
Belgium 68.91	Hong Kong 12.32	Netherlands 3.2028	Spain 241.05
Canada 2.36	India 69.575	New Zealand 3.03	Sweden 12.50
Cyprus 0.84	Ireland 1.1365	Norway 12.15	Switzerland 2.40
Denmark 10.94	Israel 5.98	Portugal 280.50	Turkey 422.880
Finland 8.788	Italy 2.825	Saudi Arabia 8.03	USA 1.5806
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# FinanceGuardian

Business chiefs warn that Brown is heading for Lawson-style recession

## Fears of meltdown

Mark Atkinson  
Economics Correspondent

**B**USINESS leaders called on the Chancellor yesterday to ditch some of the academicism on the Bank of England's monetary policy committee in favour of economists with experience of the "real world" after new figures suggested the UK could be heading for a recession with manufacturing facing "meltdown".

After six interest rates rises since the election which have helped keep the pound strong, manufacturing is in crisis and the services sector is clearly slowing, said Ian Peters, deputy director general of the British Chambers of Commerce, presenting the findings of the organisation's latest quarterly survey.

"We are suggesting that we are heading for a recession potentially of similar proportion [to 1992]," said Mr Peters.

He added: "To achieve a gradual slowdown, you apply the brake smoothly but firmly. You don't grab the handbrake and throw the economy into reverse. We want an MPC which keeps its head and does not panic at one set of [earnings] figures. It may now be time to look at the composition of the MPC."

Speaking the day after it was revealed that the MPC voted by eight to one in favour of June's quarter point rate rise (the exception was former British Airways chief economist DeAnne Julius), largely on the back of rising average earnings, Mr Peters said fewer academics and more people with wider experience were needed on the committee.

According to the BCC's survey, covering more than 9,000 firms, manufacturing is being squeezed by a combination of falling export sales and a rapid deterioration in domestic activity.

Home sales and orders are at a six-year low and export

job losses were now a certainty, said Mr Peters. "The message to the Bank of England is clear — industry has suffered enough. The question now facing the MPC is not whether interest rates should be cut, but when."

While acknowledging con-

Mr Peters said the only inflationary pressure was due to public policy decisions to cut mortgage tax relief and push up excise duties and water rates.

Kevin Darlington, of Dutch bank ABN Amro, said the BCC's warning of a "manufac-

both manufacturing and the service sector is collapsing. Thus while the survey supports the MPC hawk's concerns about the tight labour market, it certainly corroborates our view that profits are heading for a hard landing."

● The public sector finances swung more heavily into the red than the markets had expected in June. Spending out-turn tax receipts by £6.1 billion last month, some £2 billion higher than the figure City economists had pencilled in, writes *Charlotte Denry*.

But the deficit for the first three months of the financial year was smaller than at the same point last year, and most City economists expect the public sector net cash requirement (formerly the public sector borrowing requirement) to undershoot the Government's prediction of a £3.5 billion shortfall.

### Notebook

## Careless words may cost jobs



Edited by  
Alex Brummer

**T**HE biggest danger to Gordon Brown's spending settlement was always going to be the state of the economy. But nothing could have prepared the Chancellor and his advisers for the mugging being dished out by the British Chambers of Commerce.

As the representatives of Britain's small and medium-size enterprise sector, the BCC cannot be ignored. But the suggestion that the economy is on the verge of a "manufacturing meltdown" is hyperbole which does nobody any good. The economy is slowing and the manufacturing sector is hurting as a result of the strong pound. As might be expected, some of that manufacturing recession is being reflected in the overheated service sector. All that the BCC does by exaggerating the situation, however, is hit confidence and consumption even harder.

The slowdown is part of a global trend. The effects of the Asia-Pacific recession are coming through more strongly in all western economies. Even the mighty US economic machine has started to defy those who believed the economic cycle had been displaced by the Goldilocks economy — neither too hot nor too cold. Industrial production in America has come down sharply, partly because of the lengthy General Motors strike. But that is only a symptom of a deceleration also seen in corporate profits and sales. Ford, which might have been expected to benefit from GM's discomfiture, has just reported a 5.9 per cent downturn in second-quarter sales compared with a year earlier.

In Britain, Marks & Spencer chairman Sir Richard Greenbury told shareholders that sales growth slowed substantially in June to 5 per cent. In Canada, M&S is also suffering from the weak economy. Does all of this mean that the world is heading for slump? Probably not. However, it should deter the Bank of England from pursuing its relentless drive to keep the UK's interest rates the highest in the industrial world.

### Siemens switch

**S**IEMENS might consider itself unlucky. By its own reckoning, its 1989 reorganisation gave it the flexibility to cope with globalisation. Subsequent efforts to boost productivity — up by 10 per cent a year — should have made a big impact on the bottom line. Unfortunately for Siemens, at least

some of that impact has been offset by a stagnating home market and heavy price pressures in key markets.

Now the group has come up with yet another initiative, the so-called Ten Commandments. Much of it, cutting out problem areas, releasing capital tied up in areas such as real estate, separate listings for bits of the group, adoption of US accounting standards, the prospect of a share buy-back and the introduction of a share option scheme for top management, will be seen as finally getting to grips with the realities of Anglo-Saxon capitalism.

To be fair, some of the measures Siemens is taking were not open to it until recently. The group argues convincingly enough that the changes, culminating at some point in the not too distant future in a New York listing, amount to a strategy which is aggressive rather than defensive. These days, in hi-tech areas, shares have become an acquisition currency, so a decent level for the share price is a strategic must.

That is fair enough, up to a point. But behind the apparent management enthusiasm for change it is not too difficult to detect more than a hint of shareholder dissatisfaction.

### Global warning

**F**OR many years, the great lament about the World Bank has been that it has become increasingly irrelevant as a lender in a globalised marketplace where its operations have been dwarfed by private-sector flows. That may still be the case in terms of relative size but, when the going gets tough, having a development lender of the last resort is a valuable asset in the effort to maintain global economic stability.

The Bank's latest financial results show that it committed \$28.6 billion to 286 projects over the past year and disbursed \$25.5 billion, up from \$19.1 billion in the previous year. Much of the cash has gone to East Asian countries which not so long ago were graduating from the World Bank's orbit towards the OECD and private markets.

Given the continuing problems in Asia and the more recent focus on rescuing Russia, the demand for Bank services is certain to keep rising, particularly in social programmes. Dealing with the social dislocation caused by the Asian crisis is a critical aspect of the work, as Bank president James Wolfensohn has recognised. But it cannot afford political stumbles at this point.

The Bank has moved with some speed to set up a corruption inquiry following reports that three employees received kickbacks from a Japanese research institute after the award of contracts.

The sooner it provides a full account of what happened the better for its credibility and reputation.



History men... Gordon Brown (left) denies he is retracing the boom-bust path traversed by Nigel Lawson



PHOTOGRAPHS: ANDY HALL AND FRANK MARTIN

## Summertime, and the living is not so easy

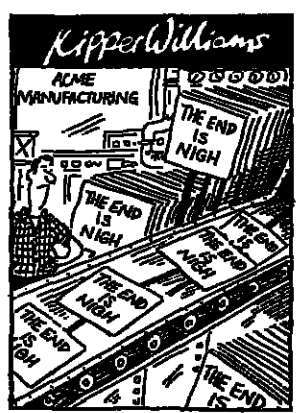
Are we re-running the 1990 recession?  
Larry Elliott compares and contrasts

**I**T WAS the summer of a World Cup, of Gaza in tears, of heartbreak for England in a penalty shoot-out, of speculation about the future of the pound. And it was the summer when Britain plunged into one of the deepest recessions since the 1930s.

Some commentators believe we are about to endure a repeat of 1990, and for much the same reasons. As in 1990, the pound is strong and causing problems for exporters, profitability in manufacturing and services is collapsing, unemployment is starting to rise, Britain's trade is deep in the red and retail activity coming off the boil. If there is a parallel with the events of eight years ago, the economy is about to fall off the edge of a cliff. Industry came back from its summer holidays in 1990 to find that order books had dried up and consumers had retreated into a hibernation that lasted two years. The dread phrase "negative equity" entered the lexicon of homeowners, bankruptcies reached record levels.

The Government says there is no comparison between today and the year of poll tax riots and Mrs Thatcher's removal from Downing Street. Tony Blair and Gordon Brown are insistent that Britain is set for a slowdown, not a slump, and that the real

danger is the country — displaying its predilection for pessimism — will talk itself into recession. Most of the evidence suggests the Government is right — at least for the time being. A generalised recession remains a possibility. In the summer of 1990 it was a stark-cold certainty. A quick look at the data shows some of the differences. At the start of the decade, the Conservative government was administering shock treatment to the economy after the excesses of the then chancellor, Nigel Lawson, between 1986 and 1988. During that period, retail sales rose by 5.5 per cent a year on average and house prices by about 18 per cent. Excess-



stayed at that level for a year. At first, the tightening of monetary policy seemed to have little effect but eventually the economy broke under the strain. By early 1990, consumer confidence had collapsed, order books for manufac-

0.2 per cent in the third quarter. By the second quarter of 1991, the economy was contracting at a rate of 2.7 per cent a year.

In mid-1998, real incomes are still relatively buoyant and consumer spending was more than 5 per cent higher in the first three months of this year than during the same period of 1997. Retail sales are still growing at an annual rate of more than 4 per cent and the current account deficit, while deteriorating, looks nowhere near as bad as it did 10 years ago.

Overall economic growth has been far less volatile, with quarterly expansion moderating from 0.9 per cent in the second and third quarters of 1997 to 0.5 per cent in the first three months of 1998.

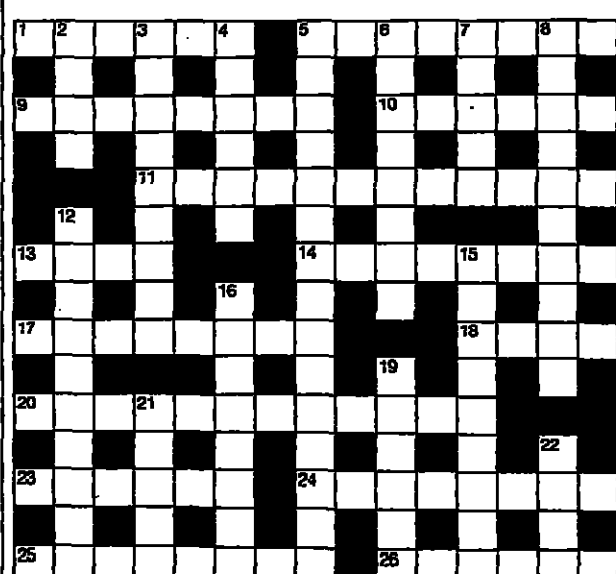
That's the encouraging news. The bad news is that exports, according to the BCC, look to be in even worse shape than in 1990; hardly surprisingly given that the pound is even stronger in real terms than it was then and firms are facing ferocious competition from Asia.

Profit margins are also being squeezed by rising labour costs. In manufacturing, output is flat but earnings are rising by more than 6 per cent a year. Something has to give. If the Bank decides not to raise rates and the pound starts to fall, a soft landing for the economy is possible.

But the monetary policy committee probably wants to see evidence that companies are controlling their

wage bills. Unless that happens, monetary policy will remain tight, and may get tighter. Then the odds on a recession would shorten considerably.

### Guardian Crossword No 21,329



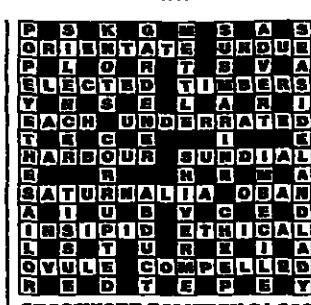
#### Across

- 1 Paddies across to the sailing boats (6)
- 5 Order tea, jam, mustard (8)
- 9 County players all in blue (8)
- 10 He may alter the blueprint (6)
- 11 Irons in the fire scuppered compensation (9,3)
- 13 One behind the counter serving port (4)
- 14 Number admitted agreed by the Faculty (8)
- 17 Be a scorcher in best feathers (4,4)

#### Down

- 18 Showing reserve — the girl's retiring (4)
- 20 Helping with scheme to get round one objection (12)
- 23 Face struggle but weaken at heart (6)
- 24 The lean years of the Depression (4,4)
- 25 That bust of hers! (3,5)
- 26 Spurring water creates a spray round the nozzle opening (6)

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